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THE
Stage-Beaux toss'd in a Blanket:

OR,

Hypocritie Alanode;

Expos'd in a True Picture of

JERRY *follier* -----

A

Pretending Scourge to the *English* Stage.

A

COMEDY.

WITH

A PROLOGUE on Occasional Conformity;
being a full Explanation of the *Poussin*
Doctor's Book; and an EPILOGUE on
the Reformers.

Spoken at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-lane.

By Thomas Brown

Simulant Curios, & Bacchanalia vivunt. Juv.

L O N D O N,

Printed, and Sold by J. Nutt, near Stationers-Hall, 1704.

Price One Shilling and Six Pence.

Certamen Epistolare: Or, VIII Letters between an Attorney and a Dead Parson; Joe
Haines's Three Letters, being a Supplement to the Second Part of Letters from the Dead
to the Living. Never before Printed. With a Collection of Letters. By Mr. Thomas
Brown. Sold by John Nutt, near Stationers-Hall.

*This Piece was written by the
facile Tom Brown*

THE
Stage-Boards of the
OR
Hypocritical Criticism

Exposed in a New and

REVISED

Pretending Account to the

COMEDY

A PROLOGUE on
being a full Explanation of the
Drama's Book; and an

Spoken at the Theatre

By the Author

London

T H E
Epistle Dedicatory

T O

Christopher Rich, Esq;

Patentee of the Theatre-Royal.

S I R,

THis Comedy seems to challenge a Right to your Patronage, since it is a Defence of that Publick Diversion, at the Head of which you are by the Royal Authority. The Wifest and Best People have thought the Stage worthy the Encouragement of the State. Thus it rose in *Athens*, and grew to that Esteem, that the State was at greater Expence in the Decorations of it, than in the *Persian* War. Nay, the Publick Money appropriated to that Use was look'd on as a thing so Sacred, that scarce any Exigence of State wou'd compel them to divert it to any other Use.

a

In

The Epistle Dedicatory.

In this City the Great *Themistocles* himself was *Choragus*, that is, Super-intendent of the Stage, and took care of the Cloaths, Scenes, and all its other Decorations. The same Post you now are in, Sir, that Great Man discharg'd in *Athens*. In *Rome* the *Ediles* perform'd what the *Choragi* did in *Athens*, so there it still was under the Inspection of the Magistrate.

Nay, *Milton*, in the midst of the Reign of Enthusiasm and Preciseness, asserted, That the Pulpit it self wou'd not be more Efficacious than the Stage for the promoting Vertue, &c. And ev'n our Modern Enemy of the *Drama*, Mr. *Collier* has been so fair as to own that Human Wit can't invent a more effectual Way of Advancing Vertue, and Discouraging Vice, by which alone he has destroy'd the greatest part of his Book. But indeed the Stage has no Enemies but such as are Hypocrites and real Enemies to Vertue, because the Stage is a profess'd Enemy to them and their Darling Vices. The Stage exposes Knaves and Fools, Misers, Prodigals, Affectation, Hypocrisie, &c. and that has provok'd some to be its Zealous Foes, under the pretended Name of Sanctity and Religion. Some have pleaded against like Lawyers for their Fees; and that which made them refuse to put in Memorable
In-

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Inventions for want of a Two Guinea Bribe, prevail'd with them to Rail and Droll on the Stage, without any real Malice to the Diversion, but meerly to get a Penny. And these Men, if they cou'd hope but a Bribe answerable to the Undertaking, wou'd write as much against the Pulpit, as they have against the State and the Stage.

There are others who are in effect Enemies of the Stage, who yet pay dear enough for Publick Diversion, while large Subscriptions Enrich a single Person, to the Ruin almost of that more Rational Entertainment of the *Drama*. But that's a Point too tender to touch upon at present, I shall therefore say nothing more of it at present.

It will be expected, that according to the Mode of Dedications I shou'd here make a *Panegyric* on your several good Qualities ; but I know by that I shou'd rather Offend than Please you, who are much fonder of doing Good Deeds, than of hearing of them when done. I will not therefore enumerate your Private Acts of Generosity, or Benefits done to Particulars, tho' I easily cou'd ; but I can't but take notice of those from which the Publick derives a Benefit, I mean your Management of the *Theatre*. When under a Pretence

The Epistle Dedicatory.

of Liberty there was so great a Defection, that few but Young Players were left with the Patent, by your Care, and under your Wing, they work'd their Way to the Esteem of the Town, and soon became Powerful Rivals of those whose Establish'd Reputation threaten'd them with Ruin. You have spar'd no Cost for the Beautifying and Convenience of the *Theatre*, for the Decorations of the Stage, and all things else that might improve the Pleasure of the Spectators.

To you therefore this following Play is justly Dedicated, because it is a Defence of what you have bestowed so much Time and so much Money to support, and in which you have, as much as was possible, oblig'd the Town.

I am, Sir, your

most humble Servant.

Tom Brown

THE

THE
PROLOGUE
ON
Occasional Conformity.

Being a full Explanation of the

Pouffin Doctor's Book,
SPOKEN

By One Dress'd One half like a *Noncon Parson,*
and the Other like an *Orthodox Divine.*

M*Y Dress is odd, but yet 'tis Alamode,
Invented to unite Mammon with God.
This Side is Real, and full of Native SPITE;
This I put on to get some Money by't.
This Side is fill'd with Sanctify'd Grimace; Pointing to each
This is more Debonair in hopes of Place. side alternately.
This Obstinate against Religious Forms;
This, brib'd by Gain, OCCASIONALLY CONFORMS.
OCCASIONAL CONFORMING is our Darling,
Which if y' Attaque, you set us All a Snarling.
Pamphlets, Lampoons, full stuff'd with Lies and Nonsense,
In Shoals we send abroad in point of Conscience.*

How

The Prologue.

How can it chuse but put our Tribe in Passion,
By HUMANE Laws to be forbid Damnation?
'Tis an Invasion of the Rights w^e inherit;
Damnation is a Right we claim in Spirit.
'Tis this that puts us Saints thus all to Work,
To Church Conforming to set up the Kirk.
* Pimps, Preachers, Porters, Pedlers, Weavers, Tinkers,
Sailors, Coblers, Taylors, and every Sort but Thinkers,
Rhymsters, Atheists, Deists, Whoremasters and Drinkers.
(For Kirk, like Ark of Noah, no Beast refuses,
But takes in All, tho' for her several Uses.)
Nay, scarce a MODERATE Churchman in the Nation,
Wou'd force us thus upon our Soul's Salvation,
TANTIVY BOYS alone oppose our dear Damnation.
A Pox upon their Zeal to save our Souls,
They'd make us Honest, that is, they'd make us Fools.
In vain they give us Liberty of Canting,
If Liberty of getting Gold be wanting.
† A Florid Friend of ours has prov'd of late,
That POW'R wou'd make us dreaded by the State,
Therefore to make us yet more Formidable,
He'd only have Your Places for Our || Rabble.
For since the Riches that we rake won't do,
He wisely adds your Trusts and Places too,
Which when we have you need not fear Our Love,
For Forty Eight Our Tendernefs will prove,
When We like doating Mothers Nurs'd Your Church,
Sure none will say we left it in the Lurch!
Or call'd it by hard Names, or seiz'd its Lands,
We for Your Sakes secur'd them in Our Hands.
We're harmless Lambs, indeed you need not fear us,
Our * Author proves there is no Mischief near us.

Like

* The Author of *Peace at Home, and War Abroad*, makes the Dissenters to consist of such a Rabble. † The forefaid Author of *Peace at Home, and War Abroad*. || Such he calls the Dissenters. *The same.

The Prologue.

*Like Galleys Doves for this dear Pow'r we Stickle,
Meerly, I vow, to save our * Conventicle;
Lawn Sleeves, and Mytres then, with Joy we'll see
In Fundamentals We with You agree.*

*Ah! Why then will you with Dissenting Brother
About Precedence make so damn'd a Pother?
Give Place to Us, and then you soon shall see
How very Complaisant to You We'll be,
To Neighbouring Scotland turn not thus your Eye.*

*Thus far in Friendly Guise I'm bid to prove ye,
But if this fail, have other Arts to move ye.*

*I, like † our Author, imitating Bays,
Come here prepar'd t'attaque you, Sirs, Two ways,
If mild, beseeching, humble, wheedling, Speeches
Won't gain your Favour—why then— †† kiss our B——*

*(a) We're Rich, and, Sirs, to Riches Pow'r's ne'er wanting,
And since we lose our Point by humble Canting,
We'll try our Bilboes—— or at least our Ranting.*

*Our (b) Author tells you how far we are able
Once more to turn Paul's Church into a Stable;
And if you thus go on still to provoke us,
Well surely do it, or may the Devil choak us.*

The

* They pretend 'tis only to secure the Act of Toleration.

† The Dr.

†† Author of *Peace at Home, and War abroad.*

(a) This is the Doctor's way of-Arguing, for he first tells us how little is to be apprehended from the Dissenters, by reason of their mean and low Condition, and then how much we shou'd fear disoblighing them for their Wealth and Power; for as if bred in Mr. Collier's School, he tells us Riches begets not only Consideration, but Power; he puts them in mind, that if they can't gain their Point by fair Means, they must do it by force; he exhorts them to Rebellion, and then furnishes them with Reasons, (such as they are) to justify it. A worthy Champion of the Church and Religion; and he wisely insinuates the Sincerity of his Zeal for maintaining of Religion, and is urging the Care the State ought to take of its Preservation, when he is undermining the Religion establish'd in his Country, by digging down the Fences the Wisdom of the Nation have made about it; and it is hard to believe, that he who wou'd destroy the National Religion, wou'd truly promote any: And all those Authors he Animadverts on for Deism, Socinianism, &c. can do less damage to Religion, than he who undermines the Religion of his Country by a popular Way of advancing its Enemy. Against the first every one is arm'd, against the latter Men provide no defence, as apprehending no Design of Invasion.

(b) The same Author.

The Persons Names.

Urania.

{ A Lady of Quality and good Sense, Gay in her Humour, a Lover of Company, and free in her Conversation, of true Honour and Vertue, a Friend of the Stage.

Eliza.

{ Her Friend and Cousin, something more reserv'd, and who, tho' she love Company, is more Nice in the Choice of it, a Lady of Honour, Sense, and Religion, a Friend to the Stage.

Dorimant.

{ A Man of Sense and sound Judgment, Vertue and Honour, of true Morals and Religion; a Friend to the Stage, because it promotes Vertue by exposing Fools, Fops and Knaves.

Hotspur.

{ An earnest Foe to Hypocrisie and Coxcombs, a Man of Vertue, Honour, Religion and good Sense; and a Zealous Friend to the Stage, because it promotes Vertue by exposing Fops and Knaves, &c.

Clemene.

{ An affected Hypocrite, Coquet, and Jilt, and one whose Reputation has not been without notorious Blemishes in the very Eye of the World, and yet continues no Enemy to the Cause of her lost Reputation, by hoping now to secure her self under a noise railing at Vice, pretends to be a profess'd Enemy to the Stage since the Publishing Mr. Collier's Book, an Admirer of Sir Jerry Witwood.

Lord Vaut-Tite.

{ Vain of his Quality, a Smatterer in Poetry, who having his Plays refus'd, turns Enemy to the Stage, and condemns the Poets for bringing in Lords sometimes as Fools.

Bedford n 17 -

Sir Jerry Witwood.

{ A Pert, Talkative, Half-witted, Coxcomb, vain of a very little Learning, always swims with the Stream of Popular Opinion, a great Censurer of Men and Books, always Positive, seldom or never in the Right, a Noise Pretender to Vertue, and an Impudent Pretender to Modesty, a Hypocrite, and false Zealot for Religion, and sets up for a Reformer of the Stage, of a Sagacious Nose, in finding out Smut or Obscenity; a wonderful Artist at extracting Prophaneness out of all things that fall into his Hands; a profess'd Enemy of the Stage, tho' a Frequenter of it; once thought a Divine, but for Reasons best known to himself he has cast his Gown for the Vanities of a Beau Wigg and Sword; Vain, Proud, Ill-natur'd, and incapable of Conversion.

T H E

The lines enclosed within the Comma are
some passages that are taken notice of in *Method*
but a Ranger of all Stage Plays Nov 1706

THE
BEAUX
OF THE
STAGE, &c.
A
COMEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I. *A Room.*

Enter Urania and Eliza.

Ura.

NO Visitants yet, Cousin? This is very strange.

Eliz. That neither of us have had so much as one all this while, I confess is something uncommon, when your House is the constant Rendezvous of all the Young and Gay of the Town.

Ura. I own I have thought the time since Dinner tedious enough in all Conscience.

B

Eliz.

The Beaux of the Stage

Eliz. To me, on the contrary, it has seem'd extremely short.

Ura. Oh, Cousin! Good Wits love to be alone.

Eliz. Ah, Madam! I'm the Wits very humble Servant, but you know my Pretences to Wit are but very slender.

Ura. The less you Pretend, the more is your Right, Cousin--- But, for my part I avow my Love of Conversation and Society! Solitude is a kind of Effect of Self-love, and may be excuseable, where there are Beauties to feed the Vanity: But I find so little in my self to please my self, that I'm forc'd to call in the Auxiliaries of good Company to drive away so unpleasing an Invader.

Eliz. Nay, my good Cousin, I am not so smitten with my self neither, as to be an Enemy of Conversation. Nature has made us for Society, and there's no living without it. And as she has made it necessary, so am I far from thinking it disagreeable: But then I'm for a chosen Company; that which is select and pickt, not promiscuous. I hate the Impertinent Visits of Fools and Fops, of the Crafty, Close, and Designing, of both Sexes, that put us on a painful Guard, and pervert the Pleasure into a Business: 'Tis that Medley of Company which you receive, that makes it so pleasing to me to be sometimes alone.

Ura. Your Delicacy is too refin'd, and your Palate too nice, if you can relish the Conversation of none but People of Sense.

Eliz. And your Complaisance too general, that can admit indifferently of all Sorts—

Ura. The Reasonable gratifie my Understanding, the Fantastic my Mirth. I relish the Witty, and laugh at the Fools.

Eliz. A Fool diverts but once, the second Visit must be nauseous: Who more than once wou'd hear my Lord *Vaunt-Title's* ridiculous Harangues on Quality? Or Sir *Jerry Witwoud's* Awkward Love or Scandal? His Lordship's heavy Poetry? Or the Knight's heavier Criticisms?

Ura. On Women, Dress, and Plays?

Eliz. On the first he's more severe, than an old Maid of Sixty, who owes her Celebacy to her lost Reputation; nicer on the second than a solemn Coxcomb just arriv'd from *France*; on the last more ill-natur'd than an exploded Poetafter.

Ura. Nay, my Lord, and he are Enemies to Women, good Dress, and Plays, with good Reason, being laugh'd at by the Ladies, shunn'd and pointed at by the Men, and expos'd by the Stage.

Eliz. Nay, the Play-house, I confess, they ought to abhor, since they so often see their own ugly Faces there.

Ura. The Stage-glass is not made to flatter Fools and Knaves, and then for they and their Friends are for breaking the honest Mirror.

Eliz. Lord! Can't they forbear looking in it, if they are frighted at their own Faces?

Ura. Or can't they correct their Follies, if they find them so disagreeable?

Eliz. Oh! Never Cousin, never; a Fool is always too fond of his own Judgment, to own his Error by quitting his Folly; and the Knave finds too much

Toss'd in a Blanket, &c.

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much the sweet of his Roguery to discard it, at the expence of his Interest; and their real Quarrel to the Stage, is not that it shows their Pictures deform'd to themselves, but to every Body else.

Ura. I dare say this is the greatest Pique his Lordship, the Knight, and some others, have to it. Their Follies and Vices are too conspicuous, and too well belov'd, not to engage them in the Squabble.

Eliz. How can you then admit of their Visits?

Ura. Because every Body else does, and I hate to be singular; 'tis always the effect of Pride, Ill-nature, or Hypocrisie: Equipage and Title takes away all Blemishes; for 'tis only the Poverty of the Fool, or Sinner, not the Folly, or the Guilt, that makes a Fop, or Debauchee, Scandalous, or to be shunn'd—— Besides, I have order'd my self to be deny'd, but the familiar things will take no denial. I know no way but making my Footmen turn 'em out of Doors; and that's a Remedy worse than the Disease—— But why do we preposterously trouble our selves with their Impertinence, when we have the good Fortune to be free from their Visits? I wonder *Dorimant* is not come yet, when he promis'd to be here betimes, to give us a Character of the last New Play, and Sup with us?

Eliz. Ten to one he has forgot it. Men naturally forget an Appointment: When is the only prospect of the Affignation, the only Vice they are invited to.

Ura. Not Men of *Dorimant's* Sense and Vertue. *Eliza*, a Man of Sense; knows there is no Merit in Vice; and whatever Folly may betray him to the Conversation of the Weak and Dishonest of our Sex, he easily finds, that there can be no sure Satisfaction on Friendship where there is no Vertue.

Enter Page.

Page. Madam, my Lady *Clemene* is come to wait on your Ladiship.

Ura. Heav'n forbid! Ah! my dear *Eliza*, who can bear this killing Visit?

Eliz. A just Judgment on you, Cousin, for your Complaint of Solitude.

Ura. Run, run down immediately, and tell her I'm not at home.

Page. I have told her already that you are, Madam.

Ura. You heedless little Animal you, what have you done?

Page. Who I, Madam?

Ura. I'll have you better taught than to give Answers on your own Head.

Page. I'll run down and stop her—— I'll tell her that your Ladiship is not pleas'd to be at home. [Going.]

Ura. Stay, you thoughtless thing, you—— you've done mischief enough already.

Page. Why, Madam, 'twill time enough; for when I came up she was engag'd in a Dispute with a Lord, whose Coach was passing your Ladiship's Door when her's stopp'd.

Ura. Go, get you down, and wait on her up—— Oh! my *Eliza*! How shall we support the Fatigue of this Visit?

The Beaux of the Stage

Eliz. Nay, I confess the Lady is naturally a little fatiguing, and my Aversion of all Aversions, as *Olivia* says, and I think her (with respect to her Quality be it spoken) one of the most insipid Monsters that ever pretended to Arguing.

Ura. Your Expressions, my Dear, is a little too gross.

Eliz. Not one jot—— No, no—— 'Tis no more than her due; nay, much less, if I did her Justice—— Oh! She's the most intollerable of Impertinents.

Ura. That she most exclaims at.

Eliz. She may exclaim at the Name as much as she pleases, she is most visibly the Thing; for in short she is from Head to Foot the most affected Creature alive; she looks as if her whole Body were out of Joint; her Shoulders, Hips and Head, moving like Clock-work on Springs. She affects a continual Languishment of Voice when she speaks, and is perpetually simpering and rousing her Eyes, to Court the Reputation of a little Mouth and full Eyes.

Ura. St, not so loud—— Shou'd she come up and overhear us——

Eliz. Oh, never fear; she comes not yet—— Her Mind's as affected as her Body; she struggles hard to a Reputation of Wit and Religion, but her Awkwardness betrays her Hypocrisie and Folly: She supplies the Necessities of a Bankrupt Reputation, a Loose Life, with the easie Composition of Noise and Nonsense.

Ura. No more—— I hear her—— I'll receive her at my Chamber Door.

Eliz. But one word, and I've done—— I'd fain have her Marry'd to the Lord we mentioned just now; there's such a near Relation betwixt their Understanding, their Vertue and their Folly, that the Union must needs be extraordinary.

Ura. Hold your Tongue—— See, she's here.

Enter Clemene.

Oh, Madam, how long 'tis since——

Clem. Eh! mee Dear excuse me!—— Let me dee if I'm not just dead!

Oh! a Chair immediately!

Ura. Page, a Chair quickly.

Clem. Eh ged! Eh ged!

Ura. Ah, Madam! What's the Matter?

Clem. Eh! E'en quite spent!

Ura. What will you have?

Clem. Eh! Eh! My Heart is beating, its last!

Ura. The Vapours?

Clem. No, no——

Ura. Will you be unlac'd?

Clem. Eh ged! No—— Eh!

Ura. What's your Distemper?

Eliz. How long have you been ill?

Clem. Eh! I have been above these Three Hours at that filthy Place.—Eh!

Eliz. What

Toss'd in a Blanket, &c.

Eliz. What filthy Place, Madam, cou'd your Ladiship go to?

Clem. I protest ee'm asham'd to name it—— Eh!

Ura. How, Madam!

Clem. Nay, but my Lord *Vaunt-Title*, and Sir *Jerry Witwoud* carry'd me by main force—— Let me dey! It was a perfect Rape on my Understanding.

Eliz. Pray, Madam, explain your self.

Clem. Eh! That School of Debauchery, the Play-house, Medem! Let me dey, if I have been there since the Charming Mr. *Collier's* Book came out, before. And now for my Sins, Madam, for my Sins, was I hurry'd to that Sink of Prophaneness and Smut—— But it has given me the Palpitation of the Heart so violently, that let me dey, I shan't recover it this Fortnight.

Eliz. Ah, Cousin! The Misery of Humane Life! How strangely Diseases fall on us, which we never dream of!

Clem. And then—— which is the biggest Misfortune of all, Madam, let me dey, if I did not just at your Ladiship's Door meet my Lord *Truewit's* Coach, who on my Complaint had the odious Fally Militate for the hideous beastly Play-house.

Ura. I own, Madam, I don't know what Sort of strong Constitution my Cousin and I are made of, for we were there twice this Week, and yet came home safe and sound, easie, pleas'd, and gay.

Clem. Eh! Madam, and are you one of the Abandon'd? Do you see Plays too?

Ura. Yes, and mind 'em too.

Clem. And do they not put you almost into Convulsions?

Ura. I thank my Stars I'm not so nice; and for what I can find by Plays, they're more likely to Cure than make us Sick.

Clem. Eh! Madam! What is't you say? Can any Person, that is a Person of the least Reverence in Understanding, advance such an extravagant Obsurdity? Can a Lady of any seen Parts run so directly on the Point and Edge of Reason, without any Apprehension of a—— And is there in reality any Person of Sense, who is so very hungry and greedy after Laughter, as to be able to relish the nauseous Impertinencies of Plays? Eh! for mee part, I avow mee insensible of the least grain of Wit in eny of 'em: They all provoke mee in the most furious Degree of disgust, and ev'n Sickness at every thing in them.

Eliz. Ah! With what a charming Eloquence my Lady speaks! I swear I thought a Play a good, innocent, useful, Entertainment! But she has so persuasive an Art, and gives what she says so agreeable a Turn, that we can't resist our Inclinations to side with her Opinion.

Ura. I'm not so full of Complaisance to sacrifice my Opinion to another's Humour, without Conviction: And till I have better Reasons than any of the Party have yet urg'd, I shall think well of the Stage.

Clem. Eh! let me dey, Medem! if I have not the least Pity for you — Eh, take my Opinion mee Dear, and recall the Deviations of your Judgment, let not the World, the censorious World, know that ever the filthy odious Plays cou'd please you.

Eliz.

Eliz. Ah, Cousin! how Gay and Engaging is the very Manner and Air of my Lady's Discourse? The very Dress ravishes, but the Sence Transports. How I pity the poor Players, who have so powerful an Enemy.

Clem. Eh! the Hideous Obscenity and Ordures of the Plays.

Ura. Sure, Madam, your Ladiships Smell has a peculiar turn that Way! For I protest I can discover no such Matter!

Clem. No, no, mee Dear, you shall never perswade me to that—— but you are one of the obstinate Ones, who tho' Convinc'd, think it a Scandal to own your Errour— for let me dey, Medem, if the filthy Poets do not leave the odious Things so Open and Barefac'd, that there's not so much as a Lawn Veil drawn over them to justifie the Beholders, but the beastly Nudities are so very Monstrous and Visible, that the most prostituted Eyes in the Universe can't look that Way without Blushes and Confusion.

Eliz. Ah! —how many Charms are in my Lady?

Clem. He! he! he! he! he!

Ura. Pray, Madam, be Particular—— point out some of these Ordures, as you call 'em.

Clem. Eh! Madam, is there then a Necessity of being Particular?

Ura. Yes, where the Case is Doubtful.

Clem. Eh!

Ura. Come, pray be Particular.

Clem. Eh! fie!

Ura. I beg you.

Clem. Eh! Madam, you call all the Blood in my Body to my Face! I'm in the last Confusion, I've not one Word to say to you!

Ura. I'm Ignorant of the Cause, being not able to discover these Ordures my self.

Clem. So much the worse for you.

Ura. So much the better rather in my Opinion. I only take things to be what they are offer'd for, not give my self the immodest Fatigue to Rack and Torture an Expression to confess a guilty Sense which the Poet neither expos'd to my View, or Meant.

Clem. A Woman's Modesty!

Ura. A Woman's Modesty lyes not in Grimaces and Affectation of knowing more in those Particulars than other People; this Affectation is the worst Symptom in the World of a sick Mind; and there can be no Modesty in the World so Ridiculous as that which takes ev'ry thing in the worst Sence. It discovers what Hypocrisie wou'd conceal, for it must argue a very good Acquaintance with the Lady to know her in a Mask and Disguise, and that at first Sight.

Clem. In short, Madam, you may be what you please— but all Plays are full of insupportable Ordures.

Eliz. That's a most charming Word; Madam, I don't know what it means, yet certainly 'tis the most ravishing Word in the World.

Clem. In fine, Madam, you see your own Cousin takes my part.

Ura.

Toss'd in a Blanket, &c.

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Ura. Ah! Madam, if you dare believe me, you shou'd not build much on that, since she's a Dissembler, and won't speak her Mind.

Eliz. Oh! fie, Confin— be not so Mischievous to bring me into Suspicion with my Lady! Shou'd she give Credit to your Calumny, how Unfortunate shou'd I be! I hope, Madam, I lyē under no such injurious Thoughts from your Ladiship.

Clem. No, no, mee Dear, I mind her not, and believe you more Sincere.

Eliz. Madam, you're infinitely in the Right, and you do me but Justice when you believe. I think you one of the most accomplish'd and engaging Persons Alive; that I mentirely vanquish't by your Reasons, am absolutely of your Sentiments, and extravagantly charm'd with every expression you utter.

Clem. Else! Madam, I speak without Affectation.

Eliz. That's Apparent, Medem! as that all you say and do is Natural and Easie, your Words the Tone of your Voice, your Mien, your Actions, your Address, has I know not what of Quality in them, which charms ev'ry Beholder; I'm studying every Motion of your Eyes and Mouth; and I'm so full of you, Medem, that the Town in a little Time will take me for a very Counterfeit of your Ladiship.

Clem. Eh! Medem! you mock me!

Eliz. How can you think me so Stupid?

Clem. Let me deye, Medem, I'm but a Scurvy Model.

Eliz. The best in the World, Medem.

Clem. Eh! You flatter me, mee Dear!

Eliz. Not in the least, Medem!

Clem. Spare my Blushes I conjure you, Medem.

Eliz. Eh! Medem, I've spar'd you extreemly, for I've not said a quarter of what I think.

Clem. Eh! Medem! Ged Medem no more —Yo've put me into a most inexpressible Confusion—in short, Medem *Urinia*, we are two to one, and Obstinacy and Opiniatietures, you know, are so unworthy a Woman of Wit,

Enter Lord Vaunt-title at the Chamber Door struggling with the Page, who wou'd stop him.

Page. Pray, Sir, go no farther!

Lord. Sure you don't know me!

Page. Yes, my Lord, I do—but you are not to come in.

Lord. What brutal Insolence is this?

Page. My Lord, don't call your Civility in Question by forcing into a Lady's Apartment whether she will or not.

Lord. I come to wait on your Lady.

Page. But my Lady, Sir, will not be waited on—I told your Lordship that she was not within.

Lord. Why, I see her in the Room there.

Page. That's true, my Lord—but yet I tell you she is not within.

Ura. What's the Matter there?

Lord.

Lord. Only your Ladiship's Page is for playing the Fool a little, Madam.

Page. I told my Lord that your Ladiship was not at Home, and yet he wou'd needs press into the Room.

Ura. And why did you tell my Lord so?

Page. Because your Ladiship was angry last time for letting him know that you were within.

Ura. Was ever such Impudence in so Young a Creature! I hope your Lordship has a better Opinion of me than to believe what he says; he takes your Lordship for an Impertinent Dancing-master I caution'd him about.

Lord. Oh! Medem, I'm infinitely satisfy'd of the Truth of what you say, and in Respect of your Ladiship I shall forbear to Teach him to distinguish better betwixt a Man of Quality and a Dancing-master.

Eliz. There's an obliging difference, Cousin!

Ura. A Chair there, Impertinent.

Page. There is one Madam.

Ura. Reach it my Lord.

[*The Page thrusts it rudely to him.*]

Lord. Your Page, Medem, has a strange Aversion to my Person.

Eliz. He's much in the Wrong, my Lord.

Lord. I fancy my ill Mien is not engaging enough with him; Ha! ha! ha! hey! hey! hey! — But pray Ladies what were you upon?

Ura. The Play-house, my Lord.

Lord. I just came from it.

Eliz. With this Lady.

Lord. Right, Madam, she did me the Honour to Sacrifice Three Hours to the Adornment of the Boxes: For Rat me if there has not been a Dearth of Beauty there ever since her Ladiship has forsaken the House, except when your Ladiship was there.

Clem. Well, my Lord, your Opinion of the Play-house.

Lord. Rat me, a most Impertinent Place.

Clem. Eh! How I am Ravish'd with your Judgment, mee Lord!

Lord. Oh! 'Tis a most Abominable Insipid Place, Rat me, in the Universe! Why, Medem, the Devil take me if I was not horribly squeez'd to get a Place there! I thought I should have been Smother'd or Press'd to Death to get in. See how Hideously my Cloaths and Peruque are and Rumbled: By your Favour, Lady, I must adjust me.

[*Goes to the Glass.*]

Eliz. Nay, that indeed ought to cry Vengeance on the Place, and justifies your Lordship's Censure.

Lord. And then the Vulgar Rascals share with Quality in the Diversion; the very Footmen in the Upper Gallery will judge of the Plays as well and louder than their Masters, tho' indeed the Beastly things are fit for none else to see.

Ura. Why how has the Stage offended your Lordship?

Lord. Rat me, Medem, the Saucy Rogues that tread it wou'd not Act a Play I wrote for my Diversion, unless I'd secure them they should not lose by it.

Clem.

Toss'd in a Blanket, &c.

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Clem. That indeed was an insupportable Affront.

Lord. And then, Medem, the Parts are so impudent sometimes to make a Lord a Fool.

Ura. That's no Reflection on the Lord that has Wit and Sense.

Lord. Rat me if I wou'd not have them Drubb'd, but that it wou'd cost me Money.

Enter Sir Jerry Witwoud.

Sir Jerry. I beg your Pardon, Madam, for so late a Visit: But since the Play I was hurry'd away by a Couple of Poets of Quality, to hear Two Lampoons, Two Ditties, and some other Madrigals, which I've forgot already.

Clem. I warrant they were hideous Creatures, Sir Jerry, that you cou'd not stay no longer with 'em.

Sir Jerry. They were the Top of the Extraordinary Private Scribblers, that always communicate their own Writings in a Third Person's Name, that they may have the liberty of praising them the more; and indeed deserve the upper end of all the Coxcombs in Town. Their Poetry was like a Bitch over-stock'd with Puppies, the Litter of was so large, that they suck'd the Sense to the Skin and Bone. I look upon a Man capable of but Four big Misfortunes—ill Dress, no Money, Scribbling without Learning, and Living without a Belly-Passion; and of these Four which do your Ladiship Think the Three biggest?

Ura. Oh! The Three first without dispute, Sir Jerry.

Sir Jerry. And of these Three were both these Sparks most rampantly guilty: They had the Cacoethes of Scribbling without Learning, Dressing without Genius, and running in Debt without any Money to pay: It's empty of Wit as a Modern Comedy, as ill Dress'd as a Temple Beaux, and as poor as—as—as a Disbanded Ensign, or Colledge Servitor.

C

Clem.

Clem. But, Sir *Jerry*, this Company's divided about the Play-house, your Opinion may decide the Dispute.

Sir Jerry. The very Mark of the Beast is on it, 'tis scandalously rampant in Smut and Prophaneness.

Clem. Do you hear that, Madam? Sir *Jerry* is a Scholar, and he declares for me.

Ura. Opinion and Vogue, Madam, has seldom any force on me, if Reason be against them; Reason and Evidence can never lose their Excellence, because a Faction run on in a Cry, that has been artfully rais'd by mean Designs, only to gratifie a Private Gain by a Publick Injury.

Sir Jerry. Madam, when I say it, you may satisfy yourself I have Reasons enough for my Assertion.

Enter Dorimant.

Ura. Oh! *Dorimant*, you are come to my Assistance in a lucky Minute, and bring Right, a better Advocate than a Woman.

Dor. Not than such a Woman as your Ladiship, Madam. But I pray Ladies and Gentlemen keep your Places, nor let me interrupt your Discourse, for you are on a Subject that has long divided the Town.

Ura. Here's my Lord's a violent Enemy of the Stage.

Lord. True, Medem, I am so—— for it's Contempt of Quality. In short, it is a most detestable Place; refuse me, detestable to the last Degree; more detestable than any thing that can be call'd detestable.

Dor. My Judgment and Reason then are most detestable.

Lord. Why, rat me, *Dorimant*, dost thou pretend to defend it?

Dor. Yes, my Lord, I am that bold Man—— But pray, my Lord, what are the Reasons of your Indignation?

Lord. Reasons why the Stage is detestable?

Dor. Yes, my Lord.

Lord. It

Toss'd in a Blanket, &c.

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Lord. It is detestable, because it is detestable.

Dor. After this indeed, who wou'd say one word more—— The Sentence is past, and the Pulpit without any more ado condemn'd.

Lord. Sir *Jerry* here's of my mind.

Dor. The Authority is admirable, I confess.

Sir Jerry. And are you a Defender of the Stage?

Dor. Certainly, Sir *Jerry*.

Lord. Demme, I'll take care to inform the poor Rogues of their Advocate. Hay! hay! He, he, he!

Clem. Eh! Let me dey, Mr. *Dorimant*, this is furiously incongruous to your Reputation!—— for Mr. *Collier* has prov'd the Poets a Company of strange debauch'd Fellows—who are furiously my Aversion.

Dor. Mr. *Collier* does by the Poets, what he says *Aristophanes* did by *Socrates*, he puts them on an odious Dress, and then Rails at 'em for their Habit. But what say you if I am persuaded to be for the Stage, even by your beloved Mr. *Collier*?

Clem.

Lord. } He! he! he! That's pleasant indeed!

Sir Jer.

Clem. Eh! Mr. *Dorimant*, you are for Paradoxes to shew your Wit!

Dor. I am for Truth, Madam—— and what I say I give my Reason for—— He tells us in the very Front of his Book, That the Business of the Stage is to Recommend Vertue, and Discountenance Vice, to show the Uncertainty of Humane Greatness, the Sudden Turns of Fate, and the Unhappy Conclusions of Violence and Injustice, to expose the Singularities of Pride and Fancy, to make Folly and Falshood Contemptible, and to bring every thing that is Ill under Infamy and Neglect. After this, who wou'd not be for the Stage, that dares pretend to be a Lover of either Vertue or Sense?

Sir Jerry. But you forget his Cloud of Authorities against it.

Dor. Authorities! Against what, *Sir Jerry*? Against the most efficacious Means the Wit of Man can invent for the Promoting Vertue, and Discouraging Vice? What signifies Authorities against Reason! But he has omitted some things which our Stage does of equal Value with what is mentioned——It ridicules Hypocrisie and Avarice; the first ruining Religion, the latter the State; so that the Stage is the Champion of the Church and State, against the Invasions of Two of their most formidable Enemies; and this is what renders it odious to those who cry out against it. It is not that it is Lewd, Prophane, or Immoral; but because it exposes the Vices and Follies of a too prevailing Party, the Hypocrites, and Misers.

Clem. Eh! Ged! *Mr. Dorimant*, and don't you think that the Stage is guilty of Smut, Prophaneness, and Blasphemy?

Dor. I think some Poets have been guilty of some of these Faults, but from a Particular to a General there is no Arguing. And the *Goliath* Adversary of the Stage wou'd not allow it in his own Case, because there has been Prophaneness and Blasphemy in some Particular Pulpits, therefore the Pulpits is Prophane and Blasphemous. But I shou'd be tedious to say all I cou'd from your Chief Stage Accuser.

Clem. Eh! Sir, pray go on——Sey all you have to say——and then have the Mortification, let me dey, to see that one Line of *Mr. Collien* is more prevailing than all your Harangues——

Dor. Ah! Madam——I'm ready to sacrifice my Reason to your Opinion, and make the Stage submit to your Resentment without one word more in its Defence——

Clem. Eh! Ged! *Mr. Dorimant*, you're too Complaisant——No, no, take your own Sentiment, I wou'd not owe my Victory to my Eyes, but my Reason.

Eliz.

Eliz. No, no, — me Lady is more Spiritual, Mr. *Dorimant*; you'll find it a hard matter me Ledge or me.

Dor. Why, Madam, how long have you been of her Opinion?

Eliz. My Lady here by her admirable Reasons and engaging Manner has won me to her side since this Dispute began, therefore I'll have no Private Parley with the Foe — But since my Lord and I have not much to say in the Controversie, we have the better Opportunity of Con-
versing on a more agreeable Subject.

Clem. Lerd, Madam, me Lord indeed is a perfect Master of the Art of Love.

Eliz. Your Ladiship speaks sensibly of his Lordship's Perfections — But I assure you, Medem, his Lordship's Quality is to me much the more agreeable Entertainment.

Lord. Nay, the World does me the Justice to own that no Man shows more of the Port of a Person of Quality, or can say more in Defence of it against the Damn'd Level-
ling Part of the Tawn —

Enter Page.

Page. Madam, Supper's on the Table.

Lord. Oh Lerd, Medem, your Ladiship's humble Servant. 1-29
[Going.]

Ura. By no means, my Lord, if you'll be pleas'd to share a small Collation, you'll do me a peculiar Honour: 'Tis a perfect Ambign, and Word of Ceremony, so I beseech your Lordship to make none to go to it.

Lord. Your Ladiship's Command, Madam, is enough for your humble Servant: Refuse me —

Ura. Come, my Lady *Clemene*, we'll show the way; and before we part I hope Mr. *Dorimant* and I shall be able to bring you to a more favourable Construction of the Stage and its Friends.

Clem.

The Beaux of the Stage

Clem. Eh! Ged, Medem, name not the Stage, unless You design to save your Supper; for let me deyn if it be not a perfect Vomit to Chaste Ears! *Why, Madam, how*

Sir Jerry. Madam, when we come to Order and Method, you shall see me throw this positive Knight on his Back, for I'll never enter the Lifts again. *How Manner has won me*

Dor. Be not so confident of Victory, that often leaves you too open to your Adversaries Thrusts. But the Town is already almost come off from your Court. *the Controversy*

Fancy a while may please the giddy Town,

With that false Reasons may a while go down:

But when at last their fading Beauties fail,

Right Reason then and Justice will prevail.

The End of the First Act.

ACT II.

Enter Lord Vaunt-Title, Dorimant, and Hotspur.

Lord Vaunt. **D**emme, *Dorimant*, if I ever saw a Fellow so baffled in my Life, tho' *Hotspur* here came to his Assistance; not one word to say for thy self, refuse me, Ha! ha! ha! he! he! he!

Hotsp. You may laugh, my Lord, as much as you please, but 'tis not the goodness of your Cause that engages your Mirth, but a poor Refuge of baffled Argument; when the Fool can do nothing with his Understanding, he wou'd confound you with Noise.

Lord Vaunt. You are very free, Mr.——

Hotsp. I speak not of your Lordship, but of abundance of the Patrons of his Book, who when they have not Judgment enough to discover the weakness of the Reasoning, run it up with a more ridiculous Mirth than the Author is guilty of in the Buffoon Part. "Oh! There's abundance of Wit in the Book, 'tis very pleasant, and so with a scurvy Jest on the Poets they march off with an imaginary Triumph.

Dor. But admitting (what I do not grant) that the brisk Pertness of the Author were true Wit, what has that to do in a Subject of that import which he supposes this to be? If the Corruption of the Morals of the Age depend on it, or the Encouragement of Vertue, few Points can be
advanc'd

advanc'd which requires a more serious Consideration. Now 'tis not probable that Men shou'd think him in earnest when they see him so merry; not that his Reasons be so clear and plain, while deliver'd in the midst of Buffoonry and Laughter: *And Laughing and Esteem are seldom bestow'd on the same Object*, as he himself observes, p. 26. of his Defence.

Lord Vaunt. I know not what you may think, *Dorimant*, but in my Opinion he seems entirely Master of his Argument.

Hotsp. Why truly he uses it as if he were, for he often gives it away.

Lord Vaunt. Oh! Good Mr. *Hotspur*, you are witty, but that will not confound Reason; this is falling into the Vice you condemn.

Hotsp. By no means, if I do it in the midst of an Argument, if I confound my Reasoning with my Mirth, and blend Fancy and Judgment so disproportionably, that the relish of the former wholly swallows up the latter, then I am guilty of his Fault, who mingles so much false Rhetorick with his ill Reasoning, that 'tis evident Truth was the last of his Thoughts, and the least of his Aim. But I understand not what you mean by being Master of his Argument, unless contradicting himself be to shew his Mastery of it.

Enter Urania, Eliza, Clemene, and Sir Jerry Witwood.

Clem. He! Cavaliers, let me deye if you are not the most unpolish'd that ever were admitted to the Conversation of Women of Quality! What, run away before us? I protest, had not the Complaisant Sir *Jerry Witwood* been here we had been left all alone, let me deye, which had been furiously incongruous.

Ura. Oh! Madam, while you were with us we cou'd never be alone.

Clem.

Clem. Oh! Never say it, Madam, all Women without a Man is furiously insipid; the biggest Misfortune can befall us: And that you, my Lord, shou'd be guilty of such a Solecism among Ladies!

Lord Vaunt. Refuse me, Madam, if these Fellows did not hurry me away with the heat of the Argument, till I had quite forgot my Duty to your Ladiship. But I am the most confounded Person that ever was guilty of an Offence against the Fair.

Hotsp. You that are a Wit, Madam, and a Lady of Argument too, will sure excuse the Fault the Defence of your beloved *Collier* betray'd him to.

Clem. Alas! I can forgive any thing for that dear Man's sake; but all that can be said against him is very trifling; let me deye, he has baffled all the great Wits of the Stage, and must be invincible to all his lesser Foes.

Sir Jerry. Your Ladiship speaks like an Oracle; only more plain and more true; and 'tis not that I think *Dorimant* or *Hotspur* can convince me, but 'tis the hopes of my convincing them, that I engage in the Dispute.

Clem. If Reason wou'd do, their Party, let me deye, had been long since convinc'd, but for meer sterility in Argument, they grow Scurrilous.

Ura. so indeed Mr. *Collier's* Friends say.

Clem. And, Madam, don't your Ladiship think the Amendments too full of Reflections, and those, let me deye, too rude and severe?

Ura. And don't your Ladiship, Madam, think Mr. *Collier* too full of Reflections, and those too rude and severe?

Hotsp. Is not he the Aggressor? Has he us'd the Poets like Gentlemen?

Dor. Or like Christians? Has he not call'd them Blasphemers, Irreligious Buffoons, &c.

Ura. Nay, has he not deny'd them worthy to come into the Church? And what more Scurrilous and *Billingsgate* can come

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from

from any Pen, than what almost every Page of his Book is full of?

Dor. And yet with Reverence to Mr. *Collier*, some of the Gentlemen he has us'd so abusively are Men of Candour and Honesty.

Hotsp. And as good, if not better, Christians than himself, and worthy to enter any Church but his.

Dor. And after this, can those who are provok'd by him, be blam'd for using him as ill as he has them, without any Provocation at all?

Hotsp. And tho' he sets up for a peculiar Excellence of Life, Principle, and Practice, his Second Book shews that he is not very good at bearing a Repartee; for through the whole Piece his Anger is visible enough.

Sir Jerry. Come, Gentlemen, you may say what you please, but Mr. *Collier's* Book is not Scurrilous; he is in a heat, but 'tis against wicked Men; if they will take it to themselves, they are to blame, not he.

Hotsp. That is indeed his weak Plea in his *Vindication*, but his Reflections in that Book are at least particular; and when he himself coins the Wickedness he rails at, he is to blame, not those who find his railing immediately directed to them and their Works; but perhaps his Party think it an invading Mr. *Collier's* Property, and will have *Scurrility* his peculiar Privilege; and as he can discover Smut and Profaneness where other People can find nothing of the Matter, so that the Terms of Exorcising his own *Devils* are entirely in his Power.

Sir Jerry. Why, Gentlemen, are you not really convinc'd by what has been urg'd against the *Obscenity* of the Stage?

Hotsp. The Question might with more Justice be put to you.

Sir Jerry. And you don't think the Stage really guilty of *Profaneness*?

Hotsp. Less than of *Immodesty*.

Lord.

Lord. Refuse me, thou art a most incorrigible Fellow,
Jack, ha! ha! he! I warrant there is no swearing nor
cursing on the Stage? Ha! ha! he!

Sir Jerry. Ay, my Lord, no swearing: Ha! ha! he!

Clem. O! Swearing is furiously my Aversion, I can't en-
dure the sound of an Oath, it makes me start! Let me
dey, Madam, if an Oath does not dismantle all the Fortifica-
tions of my Understanding, and leaves my Mind for the
time a heap of Confusion. Why a Soldier's Oath is as
frightful to me as the Report of his Pistol.

Dor. Ah! Madam! What have you said? What shock our
Ears with so smutty an Expression? Modesty is the Cha-
racter of your Sex, and to talk out of that is to talk out of
Character. A Soldier's Pistol! O hideous!

Clem. Alas! I see no harm in the Expression, let me dey!

Dor. Nor I in most that *Mr. Collier* has directed us care-
fully to in his *Chapter of Immodesty*: Yet you find, like
another *Columbus*, he has made the wonderful Discovery of
strange *Ordures*, as your Ladiship calls 'em; and the Frolick
is design'd to be carry'd round, the Ladies words are to be
drawn into the same Premunire, till in their own Defence
they are reduc'd to utter Silence, and so *Mr Collier's* Cha-
racter of the Sex maintain'd to the rigid extremity.

Clem. Ah! But the charming *Mr. Collier* does not mean
that they shou'd be silent any where but on the Stage,
where the scandalous, ill-bred, Fellows, the *Poets*, let me dey!
make us speak such filthy things, that I cou'd love——

Dor. Oh! Fie, Madam; there again! *Love!* Why, did
not all the Ancient Poets keep clear of *Love*? And are not
all *Mr. Collier's* Darts shot against the *Butt* of *Love*?

Clem. Not against Innocent *Platonic Love*, *Mr. Dorimant*.

Hotsp. Oh! Pardon me, Madam, the Name it self is infam-
ous, and contains all the ugly Ideas of things that must
not be thought of, as *Toying*, *Kisses*, *Vows*, and *Oaths* of
Constancy and *Fidelity*, *Enjoyments*, *Quarrels*, *Revenge*,

Billet Deux, Intrigues, and so forth. O, name not *Love*, if you wou'd not for ever disoblige Mr. *Collier*.

Eliz. This is running the thing to Extravagance.

Ura. And so is most of Mr. *Collier's* Constructions of *Immodesty* and *Prophaneness*.

Dor. As you shall see, Madam, before we part yet.

Sir Jerry. "What is more frequent than prophane Cursing and Swearing, and the Abuse of Religion and Holy Scripture? They wish one another at the Devil; they imprecate all the Curses, all the Plagues and Confusion in the World, to one another; then they swear by all Things; and all Persons swear, of all Degrees and Qualifications, on all Occasions, in Love, and in Quarrels, in Success and Disappointments, &c. and this, I think, is both against Religion and the Law.

Hotsp. None of the Instances produced by Mr. *Collier* are forbid either by the Law or the Gospel.

Sir Jerry. "Thirdly, 'tis Ungentleman-like, as well as Unchristian; the Ladies compose a great part of the Audience, and to swear before them is to frighten 'em. The Second Branch——

Hotsp. Nay, before you come to the Second Branch, let us cut off the First.

Clem. Why sure, Mr. *Hotspur*, you can deny nothing of this Charge! Let me dey, the Words are plain enough in this particular.

Hotsp. I think not, Madam; I think the Words are quite contrary, and so far from being plain Oaths, that they are plainly no Oaths. First, by the Intention, and next, by the Words themselves. The Intention is plainly against Mr. *Collier*. For these Mock-Oaths, as some call 'em, were contriv'd on purpose to avoid swearing, and to supply the vehemence which is natural to a Passion, or earnest Affelevation, without the guilt of an Oath; and these in the Latin and other Languages are call'd *Adverbs*, and *Interjections*; and I think what-

whatever a thoughtless Company of People may say to the contrary, that those Words made use of by the Poets to avoid swearing, may very properly be call'd so in ours.

Dor. Mr. Collier, and all Divines of the Church of *England* that have writ on this Subject, allow of *Moral Representations*. Now not to be abus'd and impos'd on by Words, a *Moral Representation* signifies the Representation of the Life and Actions of Man, express'd in the various Manners of his several Ages, Conditions and Passions; by that to set before our Eyes a true and just Picture of our Follies and Vices, as well as our Vertues, that having no Interest or Concern in the Persons represented, we may make an Impartial Judgment of the true Merit of Folly and Vice, and the Excellence of Vertue, being then the most capable of judging when our Mind is most divested of *Favour* or *Interest*.

Ura. Oaths, I think, are generally the effect of Passion, and spoken with Noise and Heat; and I find from what both you and Mr. Collier have said, that if the Passions are at all to be represented, they are to be represented truly, and therefore the Poets to keep Nature, and at the same time not to be loose, or offend Religion and Good Manners, form Sounds that may supply the vehemence of Passion.

Dor. Your Ladiship comprehends the Matter. The Heathen Poets swore at length, and without reserve, nor were they, in my Opinion, to blame at all for it; for swearing was not only the Natural and Common Language of the Passions on some Occasions, but it was to them no Crime to swear out of their Plays: But with us the Case is alter'd, and as it is a Sin in Common Life, so 'tis avoided by the Poets in their Representations.

Lord. Nay, the Poets, rat me, swear in cold Blood, without the excuse of Passion, on Considerations, and in their Closet.

Hotsp.

Hotsp. Your Lordship has borrowed that extraordinary Remark from Mr. *Collier*, and therefore as his, not your Lordships, I must needs say 'tis one of the most Childish and Trifling in his Book; and that's a bold Word: For Mr. *Collier* knows very well that the Poet is here but as it were the Historian, he only sets down the Actions, Passions and Words, of others, not his own; and he might as well say that the Sacred Author of the Scripture curs'd with *Shimei*, as that the Poet swears with the Person that is introduced by him: Nor is it in cold Blood, for whoever writes a Passion truly, is possess'd by it, and then the Poet can't be said to swear in cold Blood.

Dor. That is supposing there are Oaths in the Plays, but that is plainly denied by the Poets; and when the Ingenious Author of the *Relapse* had confuted him in this Particular, in bringing Parallel Instances out of the *French*, which are fully as much, if not more, Oaths, than those of Gad, Icod, Gadsooks, &c. and assured us that Persons of the nicest Conversation, most refin'd Morals, and Religious up to the height of Bigottry, use them, and those not only of the Laity, but even the Clergy themselves, and that one would think shou'd justify it with Mr. *Collier*; but he is resolv'd to yield nothing, tho' never so evident; answers very rationally—*There is no arguing from the Practice to the lawfulness of it.* But by his leave there is; when the thing in Dispute is not evident, the Practice of Good, Pious, Religious, and Scrupulous, Men is a very strong Argument and Demonstration, that these Good, Pious, and Religious, Persons do not think this daily Practice an ill thing; and the concurring Approbation of so many Men of this Character is a sufficient Confutation of the Caprice of one Whimsical Cavillier against it.

Sir Jerry. But the Case is not the same, there is none of the *French* Mock-Oaths but *Par Die* that comes near it.

Hotsp.

Hotsp. Sir Jerry, you and your Namesake have a notable way with you to impose on the Common Sense of all the World; is not *Mort Bleu* as near the Sound and Orthography too of *Mort Dieu*, as *I-cod* is to the Oath by G— Is not *Me Foy* as much an Oath as *I-faith*? What Oath does *Codsfish* bear any likeness to?

Dor. But let the likeness be never so great, 'tis evident 'tis not the same, for the difference of one Letter alters the Sense of a Thousand Words, as in *than* and *then*, the Sign of the Comparative Degree and *Time*, *gilt*, and *gelt*, *Horse*, and *Herse*, and so on. Thus *Gad* is no more *God*, than *than* is *then*, *gilt*, *gelt*, *Horse*, *Herse*, &c. The design of the Word in its first formation and constant use is purposely to avoid the latter Sense, and this is the only way of coming to the proper Sense of a Word when the meaning of it becomes dubious, and in dispute, as the meaning of these Words are now.

Ura. 'Tis true, Mr. *Collier*, who generally has peculiar Notions of things different from the rest of the World, may perhaps mean and think of God when he pronounces these Words; but I dare ingage for all Men besides who speak it, that they have no such Thoughts.

Dor. And the Poets use it on purpose to keep that awful Respect that is due to the Holy Name, appropriated to the first tremendous Cause of all Things, the Source of Goodness, and the Preserver of Mankind. If this be impious, and against Law, 'tis he is the Offender, not the Poets.

Sir Jerry. But do not the Persons in the Play swear by Heaven! Can you have any Evasion of that too, for I find you are prepar'd against most of our Objections?

Dor. If the same be among Christians, I think it shou'd be avoided only for the scandalizing the Weak; but if among Heathens, I do not think it so heinous; and in both Cases I take the Poet to be inculpable, since he only draws from the Practice of the World, and not from any peculiar and proper inclination to swearing.

Hotsp.

Hotsp. Next I wou'd desire to know if the Scripture be to be taken in the very strictness of the Letter? Then the Quakers are in the Right; but if it be lawful to call Heaven, nay, the God of Heaven, to witness in a petty Squabble betwixt a couple of Whores, in their Trials in the most Petty Courts in the Kingdom, nay, for the proof of the least Interest of Half a Crown, I can see no Reason why in the Attestations of our Honourable Love to a Vertuous and Worthy Object, we may not call Heaven to witness the Sincerity and Reality of our Intentions, if what we assert be true; and if this be lawful or inoffensive in Life, it is no less so in the Representation of Life.

Lord. Ah! *Hotspur*, thy *Spur* is cold now; is that the best Answer you have? He! he! he! he! he!

Hotsp. I confess, my Lord, 'tis the best I have at present; and, I think, none of the most despicable neither: I shall at least continue in that Opinion till I see better Reasons to convince me than any Mr. *Collier* or his Favourers have yet brought. As for the offence to the Ladies, 'tis only a Childish Flourish of Mr. *Collier's* Rhetorick, and not worth taking any notice of.

Dor. Therefore your other Division of the first Branch, viz. CURSING. That is also the effect of *Passion*, and if it be lawful to Represent the *Passions*, may be lawfully brought into the *Drama*. *Job* is set us in the *Holy Writ* as an Example of Patience, and of a Good Man, and therefore from his Conduct we may gather at least thus much, how far it is lawful to make a Representation of the *Passions* of Men; for while we keep within this Model, we cannot err.

Sir Jerry. What, do you compare the inspired Writings of the *Holy Ghost* to the paultry business of the Stage?

Dor. By no means——but I say, that as the Scripture is the Rule of our Life, so I can perceive no Fault in making it the Rule of our Writings too, which are of more import
than

than our Private Actions. And since in some part of the Holy Writ the meanest Actions of Life, and e'en of the Wicked, are Recorded, I suppose it will be no Fault to justifie our own Performances by that.

Hotsp. Besides, Sir, by yours and Mr. Collier's leave, the Business of the Stage is not so paultry a Concern as he is pleas'd to call it: Can that be paultry whose Business 'tis to encourage Vertue, and discountenance Vice, to shew the uncertainty of Humane Grandeur, to expose the Singularities of Pride? &c. Your Party I confess is not without their trifling Evasions to pretend this Book not Answer'd. If the Author be Easie, Genteel and Witty, like the *Vindicators of the Relapse*, &c. then 'tis Banter. If it be mixt with just Repartees, admirable Reflections, like the *Amendments*, then 'tis Scurrilous. If like others, the Matter be seriously and plainly handl'd with sound Reasoning, then tis Dull.

Dor. Nay, to do Mr. Collier and his Friends Justice, their Measures are Politily taken; to make sure Work on't there's nothing like charging the thing home, attacking the Stage in those that are the Support of it, in the Author's and in the Ladies, to tell these that it is injurious to their Modesty, Religion and Vertue.

Ura. Not considering that it is at the same time to charge all the Ladies with a notorious and publick Breach of their Modesty, Religion and Vertue, in frequenting those very Plays he Arraigns.

Dor. Or at least that they are not so sagacious in discovering Smut, as Mr. Collier; and a Vicious Imagination may blot a great deal of Paper at this rate with ease enough.

Hotsp. Nay, but Customary Swearing takes away the Sense of doing it, and I'm afraid it may be applicable to other Matters, says Mr. Collier, *Defence*, p. 98. Now this reaches all these Ladies that have not yet, or did not then, discover what

Mr. Collier has since done in these Matters; a pretty kind of Answer, thus when he is charg'd with wresting and turning the Words, to make them signifie what the Poet never meant, nor does plainly express, then he returns, that it's the Poet's Customary swearing or writing *Sunt* takes away their Sense of it.

Dor. On the contrary, 'tis as Mr. Congreve observes, a familiarity with bad Idea's, that brings them on every the least occasion to his view.

Ura. That seems to me to be like the rest of his Arguments and Answers. He is charg'd with perverting and misconstruing every thing, or at least every thing that he Quotes; he has Answered nothing to this but a plain denial, and meerly says, that since the Poets Crimes are too black to name, they pretend Innocence; never reflecting that these general Charges, and unprov'd Assertions, will hold for and against every one, the most *Innocent*, as well as the most *Guilty*, and can be therefore of no Force.

Dor. But then to say that Men are guilty of Crimes that are not to be nam'd, is meerly saying so, and downright *Billingsgate* Scandal; and his Caution in this is extremely ridiculous and whimsical; for where is the difference betwixt quoting the Passages, and pointing to 'em in the Plays themselves, ev'n to the Scene and Page, unless it be to gratifie the Booksellers, by stirring up the Criminal Curiosity of People whose Fancy turns that way to buy the Plays, and find out the Mystery?

Clem. How can you Treat Mr. Collier so severely, when he only followed the Dictates of his Conscience?

Lord Vaunt. Your Ladiship is directly in the right, Medem, his Conscience set him on work; well, I'll make him my Chaplain.

Dor. Ah! my Lord, have a care of that, for he will be then your Master; a Chaplain is Servant to none but God,

as he tells you: And as for his Conscience I dare say he has not Assurance enough solemnly to assert that it set him to work.

Sir Jerry. Pardon me, Sir, for he says, *That being convinc'd that nothing has gone farther in debauching the Age than the Stage-Poets and Play-house, I cou'd not employ my Time better than in writing against them, &c.*

Hotsp. Convinc'd? By what? Fifty Pounds? The only Argument that will hold Water; for all he has produc'd are meer Words; and he might have found some other Causes of Debauchery more dangerous, and more worth his true Zeal, as being real, and not meerly imaginary.

Clem. Eh! Let me dey, say what you will, Mr. Collier has prov'd the Poets a Company of strange debauch'd Fellows, who are most furiously my Aversion.

Dor. Mr. Collier does by the Poets what he says *Aristophanes* did by *Socrates*, he puts them on an odious Dress, and then rails at them for their Habit, which I think something unfair on Mr. Collier's Part.

Sir Jerry. *On the contrary I conceive it extremely defensible to disarm an Adversary, if it may be, and disable him from doing Mischief; to expose that which wou'd expose Religion, is a warrantable way of Reprizals; those who paint for Debauchery, shou'd have the Fucus pull'd off, and the coarseness underneath discover'd. The Poets——*

Preface to the
Defence of the
Short View.

Hotsp. Good Synonimous Sir Jerry, not so fast; first, who made the Poets his Adversaries but himself? And first to abuse a Man, and then to steal away his Sword falsely, and with treachery, is not so defensible neither. To tell the World first, that Men of Candour, Honesty, and Generous Principles, as I know Mr. Congreve to be, are Lewd, Prophane, Blasphemous, and Immoral; and after that to go on and tell the World too that they are a Company of Fools to take 'em for Men of Wit, and

Poets, is what none but Mr. *Collier* shou'd do with so barefac'd an Assurance, and these Sort of Reprizals are not so warrantable as he imagines.

Ura. He shou'd first fairly have quoted the whole and full Sayings of each Author, have fix'd an undoubted Standard of Obscenity, Prophaneness, and Blasphemy, and then have evidently demonstrated that the Passages he Censur'd fell immediately under those Heads; for Crimes of that deep Dye shou'd not be charg'd lightly on any Man, and much less on Men of unquestionable Reputation: 'Tis the greatest Murder that can be committed, and a Calumny that, without Repentance, in my Opinion, calls as heavy Judgments on the Offender as any.

Clem. And do not you then think the Stage guilty of Smut, Prophaneness, and Blasphemy?

Ura. I do not deny but that there are Plays which are guilty of some of the Charge; but those Mr. *Collier* has not been pleas'd to mention, till the Preface to his last Book, where he touches on some that are guilty of one Part of his Accusation: But from the Proofs of his first Book there is no concluding in Mr. *Collier's* Favour.

Dor. A Charge of this Nature ought to be *clear*, the Proof *strong*, the Evidence *unquestionable*, the Matter of Fact *visible* and *plain*, to all Men that hear it. But on the contrary, no Body, (to give one Instance for all) till Mr. *Collier*, e'er thought that Saying of *Valentine* taken from Scripture, or that Mr. *Congreve* put the Person and Words of our Blessed Saviour into the Mouth of a Madman; had this been plain, or cou'd it have enter'd into the Heads of the Sensible and Religious Part of the Audience, it wou'd have been hiss'd off the Stage; the Poet has declar'd he never meant it, and the Audience evidently never perceiv'd it, and yet Mr. *Collier* is not satisfy'd.

Hotsp.

Hotsp. Nay, I dare avow that there are not Ten People in any Audience but wou'd have been shock'd at the Blasphemy, and driven the Actor off the Stage. On the contrary, I saw it often myself, with several Pious and Religious Friends of mine, and it never enter'd into our Heads to imagine any such thing.

Dor. Nor mine, nor any Man's, that ever saw or read the Play, I dare affirm, but one of Mr. Collier's loose Principles, who can be guilty of arrogating to himself a Righteousness above all Men, as well as a Judgment and Sense Superior to all the Men of Wit in Town: But that what I urg'd but now is true, *viz.* *That it wou'd have been hiss'd off the Stage*, is evident from this one (instead of many) Instance, that Expression in the *Relapse*, hinted at by the Author in his Preface, for barely having a suspicious Face, and looking a little too rudely on the Clergy, was not borne by the Audience, and therefore left out the second Night. And one smutty Song in a late Play provok'd the Audience so much, that the Merit of the Play in general cou'd not retrieve the good Fortune that had robb'd the Author of. *The Soldier's Fortune*, *The Little Thief of Fletcher*, (whom Mr. Collier justifies) *The London Cuckolds*, and some others of that Lewd Stamp, are never frequented by the *Boxes*, or the better part of the *Pit*. Where there are real Faults, either in *Religion* or *Morals*, the Audience is nice and discerning enough to find them out, and accordingly discourage the Author; but where the Fault is so obscure, that it wants an Interpreter to discover it, 'tis the Scrutineer, not the Poet, is guilty; since where-ever there are Words that bear a double meaning, (and some Industrious Men in that way will force a double meaning on very simple Words) the best and most innocent ought to be, and is, taken by the just Reader or Hearer.

Sir. Jerry.

Sir Jerry. Well, well, let Mr. Collier have been never so severe, I think he has Reason; and as he says, *The Poets are the Aggressors, let them lay down their Arms first; We have suffer'd under Silence a great while; if We are in any Fault, 'tis because We began with them no sooner.*

Hotsp. We? What We? How comes Mr. Collier to write in the Royal Style? But if he mean by *We* the Clergy of the Church of England, he joins with his Scotch Brother, the Doubty Author of *The Stage Condemn'd*, and justifies all that He has writ against it; and which, next to the *Perswasive to Consideration*, is one of the most Impudent and Scurrilous Libels that was ever Publish'd in any Government against so Awful a Body of Men, and a Church Establish'd by the known Laws of the Nation.

Dor. Now if the writing against the Stage be a Duty incumbent on the Clergy, then it must be own'd, that Mr. Collier, and the Stage Condemner, are in the right of it; and Dr. Gentiles, Dr. Case, Dr. Gager, Eminent Divines of that Church, the whole, or at least the major and governing part, of the Clergy, with King Charles I. at their Head, have been infinitely in the wrong.

Clem. Yes, yes, 'tis a shame to be spoken, the Clergy have been too much the Encouragers of the Stage; but the Clergy are a Sort of Spiritual Fathers, and we know the Curse of Cham. Yet I think the Divine that translated Father Caffaw extremely to blame, when Mr. Collier had writ against the Stage.

Hotsp. So says the Stage-Condemner; but if Priority of writing gave a Justice to the Cause, Dr. Gager, Dr. Gentiles, &c. bring the right to the Stage, and put Mr. Collier in the wrong Box.

Sir Jerry. But if Mr. Collier be in the wrong, you are not to correct him: Shall they correct the Church who are not worthy to come into it?

Dor. I am secure however, since I have Mr. *Collier's* good Friend, the *Stage-Condemner*, on my side; for if he may abuse the whole Body of the Clergy, I hope I may oppose one eloping Member.

Clem. But you and the rest of the Stage-Advocates have dealt too rudely with him, considering his Character, let me dey!

Hotsp. By no means, Madam, for when he has laid aside the Dignity of his Gown, for the *Jingle* of a *Pun*; the *Modesty* and *Charity* of his Profession, for Publick *Slander* and *Abuse*; the *Gravity* of his Character, for the pert *Railery* of a *Buffoon*; he denies himself (the only Mark of his Christian Self-denial) the Reverence that shou'd be paid him; by his own Example he has taught them to be Abusive, and as to him Consecrated *Scurrility*. When his Gown is laid aside, and we find him on the Pad to Rob People of their Reputations, 'tis but just to serve him as his Assault deserves; and you know 'tis extreamly defensible to disarm the Adversary, if it may be, and disable him from doing Mischief—Those who paint for Debauchery, shou'd have the Fucus pull'd off, and the coarseness underneath discover'd.

Lord Vaunt. Refuse me, *Dorimant*, the Poets are monstrously oblig'd to thee, thou putt'st in for the next Fawning Dedication, Demme! He! he! he! he! he!

Dor. 'Tis Pretty visible to any Reader that will but impartially survey his Two Books; and his Defence in particular makes it most evident that his Aim is not *Truth*, but *Victory*; that his Quarrel is Personal; that he wou'd amuse the Fancy, not inform the Judgment; and that if he get by the Copy, he is not much concern'd whether the Cause he defends be good or bad.

Hotsp. Right, for if his Aim had been sincerely the *Truth*, and the pure Advantage of Religion and *Morals*, he wou'd never run into affected Repartees, angry Re-
criminations,

criminations, and malicious Insinuations, against those who defended themselves against his abusive Calumnies; and at the same time avoid or slur over the most Material and Fundamental Points unanswered.

Ura. And catch at every little Oversight that may afford him but a wretched *Witticism*: For Example, he is transported so much against Mr. Congreve (an Argument he is something touch'd with his Amendments) that he tells him, *That he has said nothing comparable to Ben. Johnson, nor perhaps never will.*

Hotsp. Besides the little Malice of the Reflection, there is not *English* in it, nor never are Two Negatives. But this by way of Parenthesis. He follows not the Conduct of Men of a sincere Intention, who are always convinc'd before by a serious and thorough Disquisition of what they wou'd persuade the World to.

Sir Jerry. But, Lord, Gentlemen, how Passion carries away your Judgment; you seem to find Fault with the Pleasantry of the Book, which was the only Means he cou'd think of to make his Book spread and please, in order to do that Good he design'd it shou'd; had he made a dry, jejune, Argument against the Stage, the generality of Readers wou'd never have look'd into it; the Favourers of the Stage especially wou'd have thrown it aside as all *Sermon* and *Cant*: But now he has by a plentiful mixture of *Wit* made his Book *Diverting*, as well as *Instructive*.

Hotsp. But he quits the *Instruction* for the *Diversion*; he aims at the disguising a *false Reason*, and a *false Thought*, in a brisk Expression; or perpetually to vary the Dress of one and the same thing till the Judgment of the Common Reader is confounded. 'Tis his omitting true Reasoning, not his sprinklings of his Darling Buffoonry, that I Answer; tho' I confess he is driven to a necessity of it by a bad Cause, and a scarcity of true Reason.

Dor.

Dor. Besides, tho' the Bulk of his Book wou'd not have been so big, yet there is *Medium* enough betwixt *Dulness* and *Buffoonry*, *Cant* and *Christian Philosophy*, to have gain'd the Cause, if *Truth*, *plain Truth* and *Religion*, had been his Aim.

Hotsp. And he may assure himself (if his apparent Pride oppose not such a Piece of Humility) that 'tis neither the Justice of his Cause, nor the Force of his Reasons, that has promoted the Sale of his Books; but the Merry Scandal and Drollery they are fill'd with; 'tis not the Divine, or Reasoner, but the Buffoon, that pleases.

Sir Jerry. Pray be particular, Sir, in your Charge; Words you know Butter no Cabbage.

Lord Vaunt. Ay, ay, come, Sir, be particular; refuse me, I love to be particular, *Dorimant*—— he! he! he! he!

Dor. To give all the Instances his Book affords wou'd be tedious, a few shall suffice; he catches at a trifling Mistake of Mr. *Dennis's* about *Plutarch*, but at the same time takes no notice of the very material Contradiction charg'd on him by the same Author in his *Introduction* to the same Book; and chuses rather to lessen the Credit of his Opposer, than justify himself in so Fundamental a Point, on which the whole Controversie turns; for 'tis not whether there be any Prophane, Immodest, or Blasphemous, Expressions in one or more Plays, but whether any Plays at all be lawful or not.

Hotsp. True—for in the very opening of his Book he tells us the admirable use of the *Drama*, than which nothing in Nature can be of more Weight and Consideration with the honest Part of Mankind.

Ura. And at the end of his Book he spends a whole Chapter to prove that there ought to be no *Plays at all*.

Dor. And were that true, all the foregoing Part of his Book, and all those Books he seems to design on the same Subject, are superfluous, and only to enlarge the Book, and

puzzle the Cause, by meddling with Matter foreign to his Business; to divide and extend the Controversie to an endless Confusion; to divert the Dispute from the General and Primary Point, to a meer Particular, Personal, Abuse and Squabble.

Hotsp. This not only we, but the Authors who have writ, has charg'd Mr. Collier with, and which he ought in the first place to clear himself of; and of much greater importance than any thing in his *Vindication*; I mean if his Aim be *Truth*, and the *Benefit of Mankind*, and not his own particular Profit in spinning out a Dispute that wou'd else fall within much a narrower Compass; and which being put into a fair and honest Light, the World would be the more capable of judging of the Merits of the Cause. 'Tis this is what Justice and Honesty too call on Mr. Collier for; and which if he passes over still thus calmly, we must conclude his Aim's *Mercenary*, that he seeks any thing rather than *Truth*, and that the good of the People is the last of his Considerations. In fine, he must either abjure his *Introduction*, or destroy his *Conclusion*, since they are diametrically oppos'd. This is no trifling Part of the Controversie, but the ground, the bottom, of the whole.

Dor. The charging particular Sayings in the Poets with *Smut*, *Prophaneness*, &c. first is nothing to the Stage in general; next to prove ev'n that Charge, you must first agree on a just *Standard* or *Definition*; else it will be right *Rabby Busie* and the *Poppet* indeed, as it has hitherto been. For in all Disputes the Terms ought to be clear and adequate, to avoid Cavils and endless Squabbles about *Words*, and *inextricable Obscurity*. This was told Mr. Collier at the first appearance of his first Book; but he finds it Safer, and more to his Purpose, to go on in the *General Obscurity* of the Word, than to bring his beloved *Smut*, *Prophaneness*, &c. to any *known Standard*.

Hotsp.

Hotsp. He is charg'd with Misquotations, False Constructions, and forcing False Meanings on other Mens Words, but is far from thinking it worth his while to disprove the Charge; he takes no notice of the Quotation he made out of *Ben. Johnson's Discoveries*, Patch'd up of Two different Places, and the middle, which alter'd the meaning, entirely left out. He only says he has *not* forc'd the meaning of the Poets; and when he shou'd prove what the Author of the *Relapse* produces of *Bull's* Speech guilty of *Smut*, he only says he fears he shou'd disoblige the Reader by endeavouring of it.

Dor. And he is in the right on't, for by his nauseous Comment he must have discover'd how far he is read in the *Language of the Brothels*, and with how much ease he cou'd pervert the plain and obvious meaning of the Words, when no Body but himself can discover any tendency to *Smut* or *Prophaneness* in them.

Hotsp. That indeed is the way never to be convinc'd; and after this what wou'd it signifie to shew his False Representations of Things, his Misconstructions, or his False Reasoning; you are convinc'd of his Excellence, and will be convinc'd of it right or wrong.

Sir Jer. That may be the Case with some of the Friends of the Book, but not with my Lady, *Mr. Hotspur*, she has irrefragable Arguments for her Opinion, and therefore is not within the Verge of your Reflection. *Mr. Collier's* Acquaintance with the Ancients is too visible to be deny'd.

Hotsp. True, I own it so visible that his Talent of Misrepresenting can't be hid here too. He brings the Ancients to condemn the Moderns, and at the same time excepts the only Poet extant that is a Parallel to the Moderns; if they are guilty of his Accusation, *Aristophanes* is so visibly guilty of Obscenity, that as *Mr. Congreve* has observ'd, he names things directly, which none of the Moderns do, a double Entendre being their highest Crime;

but by his way of Arguing the Moderns must be more Criminal than the Ancients; because he, as he calls it, he cuts off *Aristophanes*; had there been more Greek Comic Poets extant, he wou'd have done the same with them, and then his Argument had been just in this manner; The Moderns are more guilty of *Smut* than the Ancients, if you take away all the Ancients that are guilty of *Smut*. This is the real force of all he has said about *Aristophanes* in that Chapter, and this is his way of Arguing. Can this convince or please any but Children? For the Argument is much more forceable thus, *Aristophanes* is very Obscene, and he writ but after the Mode of the Age, therefore to judge of what is not extant, by what is, the Ancients were much more guilty of Obscenity than the Moderns.

Sir Jerry. But there is no Arguing from Heathenism to Christianity.

Hotsp. Why does Mr. *Collier* do so then? If his Instances are nothing to the purpose, why are they produc'd? I'm sure 'tis plain he urg'd them to prove the Novelty and Singularity of the Modern Poets Transgression in several Particulars; but if they prove quite the contrary to what he produc'd them for, shall he immediately cast 'em off, and say there is no Arguing from Paganism to Christianity.

Ura. It proves at least this undeniably, that his Calumny is a false Charge, and that the Moderns are not so culpable as the Ancients.

Lord Vaunt. But you see, refuse me, that he has prov'd *Aristophanes* an Atheist, and a prophane Fellow; and if you are fond of his being of your Party, rat me, you may have him, he! he! he! he!

Ura. To see, my Lord, how things may be misrepresented, I have read Mr. *Rymer's* Books of Criticisms, and he a Man fully as well acquainted with the Ancients, as Mr. *Col-*
lier

lier in the Opinion of the Town; and he gives us a quite contrary Image of *Aristophanes*; he makes him a Man of Merit, a Man of a bold and undaunted Vertue, who pursu'd Vice where-ever it was, either in the greatest Statesman, General, Poet, Orator, or Philosopher; that he kept Pride, Self-designs, and the Ambitious Machinations of the Great Men of *Athens*, in Bonds, in Awe, and so was the Guardian of the Safety and Service of the Commonwealth, and that the wholesome Liberty of the Stage in these Particulars was Silenc'd by the Arbitrary Law of the Thirty Tyrants; (but that may be the Cause Mr. *Collier* is so fond of that Law) and then for his Charge of Atheism, Mr. *Rymer* will tell you that he was only for the exposing the Folly of the Plurality of the *Athenian* Gods, which was the same Cause for which *Socrates* dy'd.

Clem. Eh! Medem, this is furiously contradictory, when Mr. *Collier* tells you that he accus'd or expos'd *Socrates* only for his Belief of the Unity of the Godhead.

Dor. But, Madam, Mr. *Collier's* Assertion is of no force, when we know that the Abuse of *Socrates* proceeded from a Private Quarrel, not that Opinion; and that Revenge made *Aristophanes* take hold of the Popular Opinion to compass what he aim'd at.

Lord Vaunt. A good Argument, refuse me, for the Honesty of the Man.

Hotsp. I will not say much in Justification of the Action, because I find Mr. *Collier* makes use of the same against the Poets, who being profess'd Enemies to Vice, to Hypocrisie and Sedition, he makes use of the Artifice of *Legerdemain* to make them appear Blasphemous, Lovers and Promoters of Obscenity, Prophaneness and Immorality; just *Aristophanes* against *Socrates*.

Dor. But the Greek Poet has the Advantage of the English Divine, the Matter of Fact was true, and *Socrates* was guilty.

guilty according to the Law of that Country; but the Poets are absolutely innocent of the greatest part of the Charge.

Ura. Nay, his Pique to his Countrymen is very remarkable, he can speak of *Euripides's* calling Whoring Stupidness and Folly, but oversee Old *Acaste's* Advice to his Sons, and *Chamont's* Advice to his Sister, in the *Orphan*, on the same Subject, besides a whole Volume to that purpose, which might be Collected out of our Modern Plays.

Dor. Nay, Mr. *Collier* has forgot what his beloved *Euripides* (who was indeed a great Man) tells him, *That he that praises the Customs and Manners of another Country, is no Friend to his own.*

Hotsp. But when a Man of Mr. *Collier's* Judgment can extol *Euripides* only for barely calling Whoring Stupidness and playing the Fool, and at the same time rail at and abuse his own Countrymen for giving a more emphatic Demonstration of that Maxim, by shewing the Truth of it by Examples, making every one see it plainly by its Inquietudes, Hypocrisies, Quarrels, Profusion, and Ruin of both Reputation and Estates; what shall we say of his Honesty, as tender a Point as he thinks it?

Ura. Right, can any one see *Dorimant* (as engaging as Mr. *Collier* may think his Character) so False, so Fickle, to quit immediately the Woman he has undone, forsake and abuse *Loveit*, who was passionately fond of him, and no sooner enjoy *Belinda*, but leave her, and not plainly and obviously reflect on the Folly of Surrendring to a Man of the Town, and quitting our Vertue for so frail and short-liv'd a Satisfaction, which must inevitably lose us what we desire, and which nothing but our Vertue can retain. And thus again in Mrs. *Fondlewife* (tho' the Poet has at last indeed, as it were, brought her off with her Husband) are not all the Fatigues, the Disquiets, the Frights, the Discoveries, and the Ingratitude,
and

and Infidelity of her Gallant, sufficient to deter any Woman of Common Sense from being false to her Husband; and is not her Character a just Warning and Reproof to any Man of such a disproportionable Age, to have a care of Marrying any Woman of so much Youth, without a good Assurance of her Vertue?

Dor. But to make the Case more plain, let us but suppose what is common; a Woman innocent enough in her Nature, tho' frail or incapable of resisting the Temptation of Curiosity and Love join'd together, press'd by the engaging *Wit*, Artifice, and Person of a handsome young Libertine, that has regard to nothing but his own immediate Satisfaction, spares no Vows, no Oaths of Constancy and Love, (which yet he thinks no more of) no Method, nor cunning Art of Persuasion to steal on the Heart and Affections of a young innocent Lady, unpractic'd and unskill'd in the Common Falsties of Common Men, - hoping the Truth and Reality of their Vows, confiding in their sworn Sincerity and Secrecy, tir'd perhaps with the Moroseness of an old, and incited by the Blandishments of a new, Lover, she yields without knowing the Danger. Then too late she finds the Ills she did not foresee, and wishes in vain that she had been forewarn'd of the Infidelity of the Young Wild Fellows of the Town, the Evils of an unlawful Amour, and how false and fleeting the empty Enjoyments of Vice always prove. Then she comes too late to the Play-house, and only sees with Sorrow what, if seen before, wou'd have forewarn'd her wavering Resolutions, and prevented her Ruin. And these Affairs the more lively and truly they are drawn, the more touching, and of the greater Use, they are.

Hotsp. But this is not the only Vice and Folly the Stage reproves and exposes. Had he read the *Virtuoso*, he wou'd have found a Character, a just Reflection on which wou'd have done him some good, and have prevented

vented him, like Sir *Formal*, from haranguing it so often on a Mouse-trap; and never have labour'd for the Flourishes of a false Rhetoric, and the Sophisms of a false Reasoning, to obscure the *Truth*, and amuse and confound the Common Reader. Who but he cou'd read the *Plain Dealer*, and quarrel with some Affronts to his peculiar Modesty, and never mention the numerous and admirable Instructions of the Place, from whence there is scarce any thing relating either to our Conduct or Honesty, but may be learn'd, not only from the excellent Reflections through the whole Play, but by the very *Characters, Plot, Moral*, of the Play it self.

Dor. Oh! Mr. *Collier* is us'd to that Sort of Dealing, he Quotes the Life of *Euripides* in Mr. *Barns's* Edition for one thing that he thinks makes for him, but takes no notice of all that may make against him.

Sir Jerry. Why, no Man is oblig'd to furnish his Adversary with Arguments against himself.

Dor. Not if he Argues for Arguing sake, as 'tis more than probable that Mr. *Collier* does; but if *Truth*, Sir, the *Naked Truth* and Honesty, be his Aim, no Argument ought to be pass'd over unclear'd which make for the contrary Position, which he has done both in *Ben. Johnson's Discoveries* and here.

Hotsp. But not to lose the foregoing Argument till a little farther clearing and justifying faulty Characters, which will answer great part of his Book, were his Objections real, not imaginary, I wou'd ask him whether the Vices represented on the Stage are not in the Practice of the World?

Eliza. No doubt of it.

Hotsp. There are then Tempters of the Chastity of Wives and Maids, whose Principles are loose, whose Love false, and Designs meerly selfish, and many of these Men of a Sprightly Address, whose Wit imposes on the weakness of them that listen to 'em; now to shew this
just

just as it happens in the World is the Poet's Duty, by that Means to warn the Ladies of the danger of their Conversation, who might else be won by their False Vows, and ill apply'd Wit. But when on the faithful Picture of the *Drama* they observe that there are Men of Wit, who want Judgment enough to embrace Vertue, make no more than a wretched ill-natur'd Jest of a Woman's undoing, it must of necessity arm them against the powerful Temptation.

Ura. For my part I have seen many Plays, and design to see many more, very well acted, but never found any of those Effects Mr. *Collier* charges on the *Stage*; nay, in all my Conversation and Acquaintance I cou'd never meet with any one individual Person that receiv'd those strange Impressions. I have indeed seen Tears drawn from the Eyes of both Men and Women, but that cou'd have no ill Effect on their *Morals*; I have seen Laughter provok'd by *Comedy*, and Mirth is what St. *James* himself allows. I have known several come away from a good *Tragedy* with Pious Resolutions, and a Contempt of the World, of Ambition and false Glory, which were subject to such sudden Overturns; but never heard of any that either lost or weaken'd their Vertue by the hearing or seeing a Play.

Dor. But shou'd there be a false Instance produc'd, the strange perversness of the Nature of One or Two is no Proof against us, since some will turn the most wholesome Food to crude and noxious Humours, by reason of a bad and corrupt Digestion.

Ura. Nay, I am absolutely convinc'd that (excepting some few Expressions, and some few Plays) the Stage is not bad, but misrepresented. Nay, if the Business of Plays be what Mr. *Collier* tells us in the Introduction to his first Book, it is, or ought to be, the most vallid Place next the Pulpit;

for our second Duty is Morality; and if we must believe him against it, must we not believe him for it?

Dor. Nor has he clear'd the Point in his *Defence*, about the *Athalie* of *Racine*, that if it were not design'd for the Stage, he has nothing to object; for *Madam Maintenon's* Recluses, if we believe some printed Accounts, are not so Innocent but the Stage Ladies may cope with them for their Vertue; and 'tis certain most of the same People, at least the Court Part of it, make up the Audience of one and the other. Now in Common Acceptation, *exeat aula qui volet esse pius*, let him leave the Court that would be Pious, is what will set the other Part of the Theatre Audience on as good a Bottom as the Court; thus there being no Moral nor Real Evil in the Boards, Brick, Stone, Paintings, &c. in the Publick Theatre above the Private Stage, and the Audience being the same, or at least as Religious and Good, his Exception about *Athalie's* being design'd for the Stage, remains still as foolish as ever.

Ura. Well, Madam, I hope this has so far convinc'd you, that you will not be such an utter Foe to the Playhouse as you have been of late.

Sir Jerry. Madam, when your Partisans here will talk all, and hear nothing, 'tis no wonder they gain their Point, at least in their own Opinion.

Clem. And you really think the Stage is not guilty of what he charges on it.

Dor. That some particular Plays are so 'tis not to be question'd, but what is that to the Stage in general? Consult the *Evangelian Armata*, and you'll find a good number of Sermons full of *Blasphemy*, but will you argue from thence that the Pulpit in general is *Blasphemous*? Yet this is all the force of *Mr. Collier's* References; some particular Plays in some particular Places are *Smutty*, therefore the Stage is so.

Hotsp.

Hotsp. Nay, and which is yet more ridiculous, to bring ev'n that Truth into question, he has under all the Heads quoted what is only *wrested* to an ill meaning, without being *really* guilty of it.

Sir Jerry. Well, I shall see Mr. *Collier* in a Day or Two, and I'll give him the Sum of what you have said on this Point, and I am pretty sure he'll be of my Mind, that you have not clear'd the Stage, or answer'd his Charge.

Dor. I will not believe so ill of his Sense as to think him incapable, being convinc'd by Evidence; but I confess, I can easily, from what he has done already, believe that his Honesty, as *tender* as he calls it, will let him deny his Conviction, seek out some trifling Cavils, return some malicious Insinuations, and so with Scandal evade the force of the Argument, and make work for a new Book, which is sure to bring him in 50 or 100 Guineas from the *Hypocritical* Party, besides his Copy-Money.

Lord Vaunt. Rat me, *Dorimant*, 'tis a sign of a baffled Cause when you grow Scurrilous.

Dor. My Lord, the Result of his Publick Works is no *Scurrilous Reflection*. When a Man thinks it does not concern his Reputation and Honour to write *directly* and *clearly* for the TRUTH, 'tis no Crime to tell him so in plain Words.

Ura. Come, come, my Lady *Clemene*, you shall not deny me, the *Relapse* is play'd to Morrow, and we will all go see it, and then we shall judge the better of the Justice of the Remarks, I'll send my Servant to bespeak Places immediately.

Clem. Eh! fye, Medem, let me dey if the very Thoughts of it do not put me into a kind of Convulsions. Eh! Ged, name not the Play-house.

Ura. Why, Madam, I have known you a very great frequenter of the Boxes in that very Play-house you're now so averse to?

Clem. Ah! Medem, revive not my Misfortune, my Infamy.

Eliz. Nay, Cousin, don't receive my Infamy too.

Clem. But indeed this I may say for my past Foible in that particular, I did not perceive any *Smut*, any *Immodesty*, *Prophaneness* or *Irreligion*, in the Plays at that time. Wou'd your Ladship believe it, Medem? Let me dey if I did not see those very Plays that are now so furiously odious to me with all the Innocence in the World. Nay, so blind was I, that I did not perceive the least of these horrid Crimes in any of them.

Sir Jerry. Customary Swearing you know, Madam, takes away the sense of it.

Clem. But let me dey, Medem, I had no sooner read this Divine Man's Book, but I turn'd immediately to the Plays which I bought for that End, and found all he said true to a tittle, so much did he open my Eyes, and cure my Blindness! Eh! Medem, his Book presently clear'd my Understanding, sharpen'd my Apprehension, and enlarg'd my Fancy; for I found it all *Smut*, all *Prophaneness*, and *Immorality*, too gross to blot his Lilly-white Paper with.

Ura. Is it possible, Madam!

Clem. Eh! Ged, Medem, let me dey if he be not a most Charming Man at discovering *Smut* and *Ordures*; there is not his Fellow in the Universe: Believe me, Medem, I have experienc'd it not once, but several times.

Dor. How, Madam! Several times, after you were convinc'd that it was *Obscene*?

Clem. Oh! Yes, Mr. *Dorimant*, I read it once to see whether it were so or not; and finding it so, I read it again to be confirm'd that I was not mistaken; and a third

third time to be sure that I advanc'd nothing but Truth when I defended his Judgment in Obscenity; and a fourth.

Eliz. Oh! Good Madam, for what? A fourth say you?

Clem. Yes, a fourth, to raise my Indignation against the Poets, and wonder at the Ladies that yet frequented their Performances; and a fifth time——

Ura. Oh! Madam, for God's sake no more, or you give me Convulsions too in my turn!

Clem. Why, do you think Mr. *Collier* read them but once over? No, no, he is too perfect in them all not to have read them over, and over, and over again, and again too. And let me tell you, you may read them over as often as you please, if it be with a good intent, to fortifie your Aversion to the Prophane Stage.

Hotsp. But, Madam, if you may read 'em so often for that End, why may you not see them as often for the same End?

Clem. O Lard! Sir, no seeing, I beseech you! Lard, to see the beastly things; no, no, I have left off seeing *Smut* and *Prophaneness*, let me dey!

Ura. I swear, Madam, you are something extraordinary, and singular in your apprehension of things.

Clem. Eh! Medem, not so singular neither——I'm not the only Lady that has forsaken the Play-house on the reading Mr. *Collier's* Book: There's Mrs. *Trifle* and her whole Family, her Five Daughters and all, who never us'd to miss a good Play, have on this Account entirely abdicated the Play-house.

Hotsp. Pray, Madam, why?

Clem. Because, as Mr. *Collier* shews you, the beastly Poets fill their Plays with abominable Ordures.

Ura. And cou'd not they and your Ladiship, who are of so very nice a Smell, and singularity in Vertue and Religion, find out this before Mr. *Collier's* Book came out?

Clem.

Clem. I have told you that they pass'd unheeded; let me deſay, I now wonder at our Stupidity.

Ura. If your Imaginary *Ordures* were not ſo viſible as to be diſcover'd by all thoſe Women of the nicest Vertue and Senſe, who come to Plays, nay, who encourag'd theſe very Plays, and do yet frequent them, and ſay yet that they cannot make thoſe Infamous Discoveries in them, 'tis a ſign that the Stage is not ſo guilty as is pretended; for where there is any honeſt meaning in the bare Words, 'tis the *Hearer*, or ſuch *Reader* as Mr. *Collier*, that create the *Ordures* and Criminal Smell.

Dor. If there be a double Entendre, why, Madam, will you and your Friend put us to the Bluſh by taking away the innocent Garment, and ſetting naked before us the guilty Signification.

Clem. Phee! Mr. *Dorimant*, whenever there is a double Meaning, care is taken to ſet the worſt ſide of the Expreſſion to the Audience.

Hotſp. By Mr. *Collier*, indeed, who points you to ſuch and ſuch Places, and tells you there is Obſcenity enough, if your Imagination will but aſſiſt you in the diſcovery.

Ura. But, Madam, were that care you ſpeak of taken either by the Poet or the Player, then it muſt always have been too viſible for the Ladies of Vertue and Honour (who by frequenting encourage theſe Plays) not to diſcover it; and thus Mr. *Collier* is pleas'd to bring in all the Ladies of Quality and Vertue guilty of favouring a known lewd Diſverſion, which is a Rudeneſs as Brutal as the Calumny is Falſe, and yet the certain and inevitable Conſequence of what both you and Mr. *Collier* aſſert; and this is the Court he awkwardly makes to the Ladies in behalf of his Book. For to deny that theſe Plays were encourag'd by the Ladies of Vertue and Honour, as well as Quality, and by them frequented, is to deny

deny daily Matter of Fact, of which there are a Thousand Witnesses.

Dor. But to say that these Places were *not* visible and obvious before Mr. Collier's Book of *Strange Discoveries*, is to grant, that the Accusation is not so evident, the Crimes not so plain, as is pretended by him and his Abettors; that they were never before taken in that lewd Sense he is now pleas'd to give them; and by consequence, that not the Poets, but the Reformer, is guilty of *Immodesty* and *Smut*, &c.

Hotsp. And, I think, that any Lady, who on his Book (which is so distinct from Truth and Evidence) forsakes the Diversion of the Play-house, plainly and shamelessly confesses that she saw all this before, and was delighted with the nauseous Entertainment, while it remain'd a Secret, and *unmask'd*; but the luscious Feast is by Mr. Collier opened to every Body, she is asham'd of the Pleasure her Hypocrisie can no longer protect her in. These are the unavoidable Complements Mr. Collier makes the Ladies of Vertue and Honour, as well as Quality, who ever have, and still do, frequent the Theatre.

Dor. No wonder he shou'd tell us of his Surprize that Vertue had yet any footing among us, when this was his Notion of the Finest, most Sensible, and most Vertuous, Women of the World.

Ura. This is his engaging Way to draw our Admiration of his Book—— But, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Evening is warm, and the Moon shines so bright, that I fancy a Walk in the Garden will not be ungrateful, and the cool Breeze of the Wind may qualifie the heat of your Dispute.

Lord Vaunt. Refuse me, Medem, I think your Ladiship admirably in the right of it. [*Aside.*] So I may get an Opportunity of Straggling with *Eliza* from the rest of the Company,

Company, and make those Advances a *Cavalier*, so well vers'd in Gallantry, ought to do to a Lady alone.

Dor. 'Twill be at least an agreeable Cessation for us to recover Breath, and our Adversaries their Temper; we'll therefore wait on your Lordship.

*For Passion never will to Justice yield;
Tho' vanquish'd, still pretends to keep the Field;
Will make a boast of empty Trophies won,
And with false Heat their known Disgrace disown.*

The End of the Second Act.

ACT III. SCENE, A Garden.

Enter Sir Jerry Witwoud and Dorimant.

Dor. **T**HUS you see, Sir Jerry, that I have made out that the Stage is the School of Vertue, where Vice and Folly are expos'd, and Vertue promoted; or to put it into Mr. Collier's own Words, which are more prevalent with you, I have made it appear that the Business of the Stage is to Recommend Vertue, and Discourage Vice, to shew the Uncertainty of Humane Greatness, the sudden Turns of Fate, and the unhappy Conclusions of Violence and Injustice, to expose the Singularity of Pride and Fancy, to make Folly and Falshood Contemptible, and to bring every thing that is ill under Infamy and Neglect.

Sir Jerry. Go on, Sir——

Dor. Now, Sir Jerry, from this Maxim of Mr. Collier's, it follows that these Vices, and these Follies, must be drawn, or else they cou'd not be expos'd. Is it not therefore an Argument of an Inveterate Hypocrite that makes your Reformers such Enemies to the Stage? If you are such Zealots for Morality, first Reform your selves——

Next, pray why are you less severe on Taverns, Brandy-Shops, and other Tippling-houses, on Gaming-Tables,
H Usurers,

Usurers, Oppressors of the Poor, Betrayers of the Publick, Libellers of the State and Church, and the like.

Sir Jerry. We must do all things by degrees.

Dor. You begin therefore with your Endeavours to suppress that which from your own Confession is useful to the promoting the End you pretend to, and let those things alone to hereafter which all the World with one Voice condemn as pernicious to Vertue and to Mankind. And let me tell you, *Sir Jerry*, if the Stage did not make its Business to expose Knaves and Hypocrites, you wou'd say nothing to it; 'tis because it declares against you that you are so Clamorous against that.

Sir Jerry. Well, well, Mr. *Dorimant*, let all Mankind, Reason and Demonstration, say what they will, I'm sure I'm in the right—

Dor. There indeed spoke the Enemies of the Stage all in one; you are a Pleasant Arguer, *Sir Jerry*, on my Word.

Sir Jerry. But you have not touch'd one thing, the meeting of so many lewd People together.

Dor. The same meet at the Church, the Meeting-house, the Park, Epsom, Tunbridge, &c.

Sir Jerry. All, all unlawful Meetings, where there are above Two or Three.

Dor. Ha! ha! ha! But see the Ladies—

Enter Lord Vaunt-Title, Urania, Eliza, and Clemene.

Eliz. My Lord, I protest I can gather nothing from all you have said but the very great Esteem you have for your own Quality.

Lord Vaunt. And don't you think, Medem, that others ought to have the like, refuse me! Ha!

Eliz. Refuse you I shall for all that I can discover in your Lordship—

Clem.

Clem. Eh! Ged, Medem, you destroy my Night's Rest by one word more for the Stage; it has lost me all the Pleasure of this Moon-light Walk about your Charming Gardens— Oh, Sir *Jerry*, I'm sure I come to join in your Triumph over this obstinate One.

Dor. Faith, Madam, we have been like true Disputants, both weary, but neither convinc'd. But I have made a considerable Discovery, Madam *Clemene*, which will shock your esteem for Sir *Jerry*.

Ura. Ah! Pray let us hear that, Mr. *Dorimant*, for that wou'd be Triumph indeed.

Clem. But a Triumph, Medem, that your Ladship, let me dey, will not obtain.

Dor. I can assure you that he is now going on a Work that will for ever disoblige you.

Clem. Eh! Ged, Mr. *Dorimant*, that's impossible!

Dor. Nay, I confess I may be deceiv'd, and you that cou'd sacrifice your Reason to his Opinion, may, perhaps, discharge your Pleasure and Inclination too on that Account.

Clem. That you may be sure of, Mr. *Dorimant*, for, Gad forgive me, I was too too wickedly inclin'd to see those filthy Plays, 'til he and Mr. *Collier* made me a Convert—

Dor. Hear then, Madam, thus it is— having depriv'd you of all Rational and Honourable Recreations, he proceeds to confound your meer Diversions too, as *Tunbridge*, *Epsom*, the *Bath*, *Richmond*, *Lambeth*, and *Islington*, *Wells*, *High-Park*, the *Mall*, *Spring-Garden*, nay, the very Fields that lead to those wicked Places, are to go down; Vice and Vanity are to be dispatch'd Root and Branch, and you must, (as a *French Popish Prelate* has it) like the Innocent *Jews*, divert your selves with your Children at home.

Ura. But what if we have none?

Lord Vant. Rat me, Medem, you must get 'em, he! he! he! Refuse me if *Dorimant* be not a pleasant Fellow, ha! ha! ha!

Clem. Eh! Good Mr. *Dorimant*, you kill me——you suffocate me; you put me into insupportable Convulsions!——No *Epsom*! No *Tunbridge*! Impossible! It cannot be! Speak, Sir *Jerry*——Are you so furiously Cruel to take away from the Ladies our beloved *Tunbridge*, and all that?

Sir Jerry. Most certainly, Madam; the Work of Godliness is not to be done by halves! What avails the shutting the Doors of that House of *Dagon*, the Play-house, if we leave him the Hills and High Places? To drive the Devil from his Chamber-Practice, and leave him the Fields? T ad b now

Clem. Eh! Ged! But the poor People, let me dey, 'twill be hard on the Inhabitants of those Places, Sir *Jerry*, who live by the Resort of Company.

Sir Jerry. So do the debauch'd Actors, Madam——but for the future let Godliness be a Gain, and let the Wicked Starve! For Wealth gives Consideration! Now I'm for making People rich by Vertue, and so turn the Pomp and Vanity of the World to the better side. If People got Estates by Religion, how wou'd the Churches be throng'd, and the Clergy ador'd? For Wealth gives Consideration——I stick to that——'Tis true, 'tis hard for the People of *Epsom*, *Tunbridge*, &c. to Starve——yet the Herb of the Field, and the Water of the Brook, will prevent that——The Patriarchs fed so, and why not they? If they wou'd fare better, let 'em come into our Reforming Project.

Clem. But let me dey, Sir *Jerry*, this is furiously extravagant——Persons of all Sorts go thither to drink the Waters for the Cure of Distempers, and the like, Sir *Jerry*.

Sir Jerry. Ay, ay, Madam——and the like may signifie much; but as for the rest, they are meer Pretences to get Opportunities of Wickedness, for can't they have the Waters brought home? Is it decent, do you think, to have so many Men and Women meet together? Is not the Devil ready enough at home, but they must go seek him out,
and

and run into Temptations— The Ancient *Pagans* were more cautious ; their Young Maids, nay, and their Matrons too, were never permitted to go abroad to Publick Meetings, and were only treated by their Relations ; and ev'n in this wicked Age, all *Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Natolia*, in short, all *Asia* and *Africa*, manage them so still.

Dor. Right, Sir *Ferry*, I am now your Convert, there is a Majority against the Practice of our Ladies ; and the Rules of Modesty must be taken from the greater number ; for so Mr. *Collier* does for the Stage, and the Stage is the Image of the World.

Sir Ferry. Well, I can't forbear saying an honest *Heathen* or *Turk* is none of the worst *Christians* ; and a very indifferent Religion well believ'd will go a great way.

Dor. I submit, Sir *Ferry*, I Swear you have Conquer'd : You have Ten *Colliers* in your Belly ; for this is infinitely more to the Purpose than all he has urg'd.

Sir Ferry. Do you think that it is not highly Immodest for Men and Women to meet at the *Wells*, and drink the same Waters ? But then is it not Monstrous, most *Babylonish*, and Obscene, for Men and Women to go into the *Bath* together ? Do you not imagine on those Occasions the Men have Passions rais'd that cannot be discharg'd without Trouble, or satisfied without a Crime, as Mr. *Collier* says—

Dor. Admirable, Sir *Ferry*, he speaks like an Oracle.

Sir Ferry. Is not the Transition easie from one Sex to another ? As thus at the *Wells*—the Waters are the same, they pass the same way, and the distance that parts 'em is too small to keep off the Imagination which is Pregnant on these Occasions—Filthy Idea's will present themselves before us—and the whole Scene of *Smut*—to say no worse—will come in view—

Dor. Excellent, Sir *Ferry*.

Sir Ferry. As for Example, the Gallant drinks the Water with his Mistress (I mean his Whore) for I'm for giving every

ry thing its proper Name; to complement Vice, is next Door to worshipping the Devil; they both take their turns, having first wished each other's Water a free Passage; (Oh the Lewdness of the Age) it begins to work with him, this puts him in mind of what it may do with her; this leads his Mind down the Ladies Walk, (I cry you Mercy, down the Whores Walk) while Necessity forces his Body down the Mens—

Ura. But why don't you call the Mens Walk the Rogues, Sir *Ferry*?

Sir Ferry. No Interrupting— Well, he arrives at the Place of Ease, that puts him in mind whereabouts she is, and when 'tis come to that Women do not—

Clem. Eh! Ged, let me dey, Sir *Ferry*, you are furiously Impertinent—

All. Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Sir Ferry. Nay, Madam, I shall not Complement Vice, 'tis but one Remove from worshipping the Devil. I must go on—

Clem. For Heav'n's sake, Sir, consider where you are, and among whom— Modesty is the Character of our Sex; and Men that entertain Women with rude Discourse affront them; (as Mr. *Collier* says) to Treat Ladies with such Stuff, is to presume on their Patience to abuse them.

Sir Ferry. Ay, ay, Madam, you may say what you please, but I shall go on— Humility is a Vertue, but Meanness and sneaking Civility to Vice is below my Character— I must go on, Madam—

Ura. }

Eliz. }

And we'll go off then.

Ura. If these be your Stage Reformers, deliver us from their Doctrine by a speedy conveyance of them to *Bedlam*—

[*Exeunt Ura. Eliz.*

Lord Vaunt. Ha! My Pert *Eliza* slipt away! I'll after her.

[*Exit.*

Clem. I vow you have frighten'd away Madam *Urania* and her

her Cousin ; but, Sir *Ferry*, won't you allow the *Bath*? You know the Quality goes there.

Sir *Ferry*. I am no respecter of Persons, the *Bath* is the worst of all, for that is like putting Men and Women to Bed together : *O Tempora ! O Mores !*

Clem. Will you not then allow Men and Women to meet—

Sir *Ferry*. No, marry won't I——What shou'd they meet for? What uses to follow the meeting of Man and Woman? Wickedness, wickedness ; are we not forbid to look on a Woman? And can Women appear in Publick without Dressing, and showing their Faces? Nay, their naked Necks and Breasts ! And then you know how easie the Transition is from one Part of the naked Body to the other ; the Devil is always at hand, and the Flesh always about us—The Eyes, the Nose, the Mouth, and every Part, in short, of a Pretty Woman administers lewd Thoughts. If she have a pretty little Mouth—why presently Men are drawing lewd Consequences ; by a fine Hand and Arm, they will be led to a handsom Leg and Foot, and thence the Bars are too feeble to hinder more Criminal Approaches—And what need is there of all this? Have Men enter'd into a League with Wickedness, and are they not content with the Ills of Solitude, but they must hunt after more in Company? Believe me, Madam, I know it by Experience, all Mankind are deprav'd in their Appetites and Inclinations, and Vice (as Mr. *Collier* proves) is more inviting than Vertue—Man was made in Solitude—Society was the Invention of Luxury ; and he that built the first City was a Murderer—When in the Woods the Noble Savage ran—then there was no Whoring, no Immorality and Prophaneness ; no Whoring, Madam—every Man kept his Wife or Concubine to himself—there was no *Epsom*, no *Tunbridge*, no *Bath*, no *Richmond*, and the like, to draw Whores and Rogues together—Nay, these Places are worse than the Play-houses, for there is nothing else to divert them

them from corrupting Mens Wives, and spending their Money, from Gaming, Drinking, and all that—but at the Play, the wicked Play it self may engage them awhile—Then at these Places Opportunity gives both Temptation and Relief; at the Play-house some Accident may hinder, or at least defer, their Wickedness.

Dor. Ten to One, *Sir Jerry*, but that's the Reason the Ladies have so forsaken the *Theatre*.

Clem. Eh! Gad, *Sir Jerry*, no more, you have furiously mov'd my Aversion, let me dey.

Sir Jerry. Why, Madam? Do not the City spend their Estates at these lewd Places? Are not they the Market of Sharpers? The Expence of Plays is a Trifle to them, Madam: Besides, the City Wives meet their Gallants there, and abuse their poor Husbands with the greater ease, by the promiscuous Meeting of all Company there, and the abominable Liberty of the Place.

Dor. Nay, I'll ev'n withdraw, for I know not when he'll ha'done, as long as he has any Hearers of an Adverse Party.

[*Exit.*

Sir Jerry. Nay, as if Dressing, Ogling, and so forth, wou'd not do it. They Dance together in Publick too, which heats their Blood, that stirs up their Imagination, that sets fire to their Desires, and that blows up their Vertue, and makes 'em run mad to make use of Opportunity; for their Motion and Action have a strange Force on the Inclinations: They add to the Charms of the Person that were too strong before, and deprive us of all that shou'd make our Defence. [*Looking about*] I protest, Madam, we are left alone!— And now, Madam, I cannot lose this Opportunity of paying my grateful Acknowledgment to your Ladiship for Espousing my Cause; for were it not for those frail Ladies that we have made Converts, I protest the Poets wou'd run us down. But these Ladies being great Coquets, engage the Beaux that pretend to Wit, and such a Party will gain any Cause.

Clem.

Clem. But you have lost your Cause with me, let me deye! If you go on at this rate—you have so furiously provok'd me I cou'd almost have found in my Heart to have discover'd you to be a False Brother in a Lay Habit. But pray, by the Way, why have you left off your Gown?

Sir Jerry. Because some Accidents may happen, Madam, that may bring a Scandal on the Gown; and now whatever I say or do falls on the Prophane Laity, and so I give Sir John Brute a Rowland for his Oliver.

Clem. But, Sir Jerry, you that correct us all need not fear that; you can be in no danger of bringing Scandal, who bring so much Glory to the Gown.

Sir Jerry. Alas! Madam, we are all Mortal—all Flesh is frail. And do you think, Madam, that any Man alive cou'd say so many severe things on both Sexes, without having had a sufficient Experience of those Evils and Frailties in himself?—And Gratitude, join'd with these Transcendent Charms, which your Ladyship displays in your Resplendent Face, are so Transporting, and so Enthusiastick, that I am borne out of my self, and absolutely forc'd on what I can't avoid—Oh! Madam, you have rais'd a Passion that cannot be discharg'd without trouble.

Clem. What? Nor satisfy'd without a Crime?

Sir Jerry. That I don't know—What is a Crime to the Wicked, may not be so to the Godly. If you guard well the Appearance, half the Duty of Religion is preserv'd, and you avoid the Scandal; now the Crime, as to Men, is not none, if not known; and in many reputed Crimes the Scandal is all the Offence: Remove that, and the Crime vanishes; as particularly in a Private Amour, where there is no Injury—

Clem. Eh! let me deye, if this be not furiously surprising—

Sir Jerry. Or if it were a Crime, you look so killing Fair, you justifie Rebellion— And I can no longer waste Words

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where

where Opportunity is so fair. Modesty is the Character of your Sex, and Boldness of mine—Now Boldness requires Action, and Modesty Passion—that is, I must attack you, and you must not resist—and so the *Decorum* and Character of both Sexes are preserv'd. If the Poets wou'd bring their Lovers to Action without so many Words, 'twere something—but their fine Women often lose their Reputation by their Coqueting, and might cheaper be happy in Deed than in Talk—They seem fond of the Scandal, and fearful of the Pleasure; whereas the Pleasure shou'd engage their Fondness, and the Scandal their Fear.

Clem. Admirable Doctrine, let me deye.

Sir Jerry. Are you pleas'd with it, Madam?—Let me deye, (for I will not swear as much as by those bright Eyes, or those pretty Lips) if I will not immediately reduce it to Practice—for till then it is but a useless Speculation.

[Offers to kiss and embrace it.]

Clem. Let me deye, if you are not furiously Rude, Sir Jerry—Oh! Sir, Pray, pray—Eged—What, will you attempt upon my Honour?

Sir Jerry. Not on your Honour, Madam, only on your Person—your Honour is only in Words, but your Pleasure in Deeds. Come, come, we are alone, I all over Love, and you all over Charms!

Clem. Eh! Lard! Sir Jerry, I swear I'll run away from you.

Sir Jerry. Come, come, you must not strive any longer against your own Satisfaction—your Honour's safe—put, put off the Veil, I know you're a Hypocrite.

Clem. Nay, now you begin to be Abusive, I vow I'll call out if you won't let me alone—A Hypocrite?

Sir Jerry. Nay, I'm sure of it, for almost all our Party are so.

Clem. Eh! Let me deye, if you be not furiously Abusive—and yet let me deye again, he is a Charming Person—he has Wit,

Wit, nay, and Discretion too— and 'tis his Interest besides to keep all Secret; he knows I find that I am a Hypocrite, and what if I confirm him mine by letting him into the Secret, 'twill engage him to Celebrate me as a Vertuous Patroness of his Works— Eh! Fee, Sir *Ferry*, I'll call out— Eh! Ged, what are you doing— Sir *Ferry*— I swear we shall be caught, let me dey!

Sir Ferry. Ay, ay, with Pleasure, Madam; Gad, if I don't give the Formal Ladies some Encouragement this Way, our Cause will fall— Oh! my Life! my Soul! my—

Enter the Company Laughing.

All. Ha! ha! ha! he! he! he! he!

Dor. Why, how now, Sir *Ferry*! What, a Rape? Bless us, What's become of our *Anti-Epsomist*? What, is this the Effect of Solitude?

Ura. What, in my Garden too? Oh! hideous— Sir *Ferry*, I owe something to your *Quondam Gown* (for we have heard all) or my Footmen and Horse-pond shou'd revenge the Affront.

Dor. But my Lady *Clemene*— What, will you ever go to the Wicked, Debauch'd, Lewd, Play-house any more, when the Confounder of the Stage can so much better divert you?

Clem. Let me dey, my Lady *Urania*, I'm overjoy'd that you came to my Rescue— for let me dey, what is a weak Woman in such a Man's Hands— But let me dey, if Sir *Ferry* be not a Person that of all Persons I never took for such a Person; but he is become furiously my Aversion, and in revenge I will go every Day this Week to the Play-house—

Sir Ferry. Gentlemen, I am caught— but I hope, since my Zeal has been private here, so you'll let my Folly be. For if the damn'd Poets shou'd get this Story by the end, I shall be Worried to Death by 'em; I ask your Pardon, Lady, and so good Night.

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Ura.

Ura. But 'tis fit such a Hypocrite shoud be expos'd.

Sir Jerry. Ah! No—— if the Hypocrites were expos'd, half the Town woud go naked—— and all the Stage Enemies, like me, go off with their Tails betwixt their Legs.

[Exit.]

Dor. Well, whatever Grave Pretences some may make,
'Tis for a Truth, let all that bear me take,
Those that with Singular and Peculiar Pride,
Set up for Vertue above all beside,
Do but with cunning Art great Faults disguise,
And steal their guilty Joys from our observing Eyes;
At harmless Pleasures they with fury rail,
That they the better may their Blots conceal.

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AN
EPILOGUE

UPON THE

Reformers;

SPOKEN BY

Mr. WILKS, at the Theatre-Royal in
Drury-lane.

WELL, Gentlemen, this boldly we may say,
Howe'er you like it, 'tis a Modest Play;
There's no Prophaneness, and no Bawdy, in't;
No, not one single double-meaning hint;
And that's enough in so Reform'd an Age,
For all our Author to reform the Stage.
'Tis now some Years since Drowsie Reformation
Rous'd its dull Head, and saw its Restoration;
What Influence has this had upon the Nation?

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Re

The Epilogue.

Ye Rakebells of the Rose, let Rouse confess
If at his House he draws one Hogshead less.
And you intriguing Sparks enquire of Jenny
If it has baulk'd her of one Bawdy Guinea.
Is Gaming grown a less destructive Vice?
Are fewer Families undone by Dice?
No—for the Cunning Men the Town infest,
And daily for new Quarries are in quest.
Oft times in Publick they their Ends arrive at,
But Shoals of Bubbles are drawn in in private.
'Tis by these Means they furnish out Debauches,
And Sharpers now like Quacks set up their Coaches.
Now let us cast our Eyes upon the City,
These are no Vices—no—none that are Witty.
Expensive are the sprightly Sins of Wits,
But frugal, gainful, Vices are for Cits.
They never Swear, because for that they pay,
But they will Lie—yes—in a Trading Way.
They've Lies in readiness whene'er they Barter,
And claim the Right of Cheating from their Charter.
They with Suburbian Whores ne'er lead their Lives,
But why?—why, they can't satisfy their Wives.
Besides, with Cost the Suburb Punk they Treat,
But they will drink, because e'en drunk they Cheat.
Examine all the Town, each Quarter view,
And we shall find what Butler said is true;
We all are proud for Sins we are inclin'd to,
By damning those we never have a mind to.
Thus Reformation has discharg'd its Rage
Upon the Vices of the Sinking Stage.
As Ships
When fraught with Foreign Luxury they sail,
As soon as ever they descry a Whale
Throw out a Tub to find the Monster play,
Lest the rich Cargo shou'd become its Prey.

The Epilogue.

So some to turn our furious Zealot's Rage
From lov'd high Crimes have overthrown the Stage.
Gentlemen, briefly this has been our Fault,
We more for others than our selves have Thought.
Each Man wou'd piously reform his Neighbour;
To save himself he thinks not worth his Labour.
With Zeal and Sin at once we're strangely warm'd,
And grow more Wicked as we grow Reform'd.
Oh! 'tis a blessed Age, and blessed Nation,
When Vice walks cheek by jowl with Reformation.
In short, let each Man's Thoughts first look at home,
And then to Foreign Reformations roam.
If all the Fools and Knaves met here to Day,
Wou'd their own Faults and Follies first Survey,
We need not fear their Censures of the Play.

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